

John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1731–35)

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From Mary (Granville) Pendarves¹

New Bond Street [London]
January 15, 1730/31

I have but a moment's time, and I cannot employ it better than in assuring Cyrus,² though I doubtless appear unworthy of the favour he shows me, that Aspasia³ has been more unfortunate than ungrateful. The true reason I have not wrote has been my incapacity of doing it. A great weakness I had in my eyes for a considerable time, and the fear of its returning if I strained them too soon, has been the only reason of my silence. I have received all your letters, and am infinitely obliged by them. Selima⁴ several times designed making up for my deficiency, but her heart failed, and she said she was ashamed, and talked of her not being able to write well enough, and several things of that sort which I could not agree with her in. We talk of the worth of Cyrus and Araspes⁵ whenever we have any private conversation. I desire when you come to town you will let me know what day will be most convenient for you to come to me, a pleasure I depend upon. But do not come without sending, because my brother is in the house with us, and he is frequently engaged with company. It would be a great concern to me and to Selima to have you come at a time when perhaps we may either be abroad, or engaged with company that would not be agreeable to you. I hope Araspes is well, though you do [not] mention him in your letter. I am called away. Ought I not to be ashamed to send such a hasty scrawl to Cyrus? If it serves to convince you that I am not quite unworthy of your correspondence I shall esteem it one of the best letters I ever wrote. And that you may not think you are the only person who have thought themselves neglected by me, at the same time I received your last I had one from Varanese⁶ that wounded my very heart. However, I hope I have regained her favour, and that you will not be less indulgent, to one who knows very well how to value your acquaintance, and is

Your most faithful friend and humble servant,

Aspasia

I make it my humble request that you will burn every letter I write.⁷

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 20–21.⁸

¹Replying to his of Dec. 28, 1730 (*Works*, 25:261–62), and Jan. 11, 1731 (*Works*, 25:263).

²JW's literary nickname in the Cotswolds group.

³Mary (Granville) Pendarves's literary nickname in the Cotswolds group.

⁴Ann Granville's (Mary's sister) literary nickname in the Cotswolds group.

⁵CW's literary nickname in the Cotswolds group.

⁶Sarah (Kirkham) Chapone's literary nickname in the Cotswolds group.

⁷This request was renewed Aug. 26, 1731. Wesley apparently honoured it, but first made the abstracts (using literary pseudonyms) in his letter-book.

⁸Transcription published in *Works*, 25:267–68.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves

[London]
January 27 [1731]

It is no small pleasure to us, the hope of seeing Cyrus and Araspes on Saturday [January 30] in the afternoon. We shall be at home from five till eight, at which hour we are obliged to go abroad to supper. We are sorry to stint your time, but we have been engaged some time, and cannot very well break it off. We join in our humble service to your brother, and are

Your assured friends and humble servants.

I am in great haste.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 22.¹

¹Transcription published in *Works*, 25:268–69.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves

[London]
January 30 [1731]

It is a vast concern to me and my sister that we are obliged to put off the favour you designed us this afternoon. My sister is so much out of order that she keeps her bed, and I cannot very well leave her bedside. We hope your stay in town will not be short, and if you are not engaged on Monday in the afternoon we hope you and your brother will favour us with your company for an hour or two. If my sister is not well enough to leave her chamber I will send you word. This is a great disappointment to us, but I hope we shall have amends made us. I am, sir,

Your most humble servant.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 22.¹

¹Transcription published in *Works*, 25:269.

From William Morgan

[Oxford]
Feb. 5, 1730[/31]

Dear Sir,

About seven last night I reached Oxford, and after having long rested my wearied limbs, went this morn to Bo and Cro,¹ who have exceeded our best wishes. I have just finished my rounds. I perceive it was not for nothing that I came hither before you. Stewart's papers will not be in London till Monday. He desires you to get the rule of court for him. Let him have it as soon as possible. Costar begs you would call at Mrs. Hannah Ebbins, upholsterer in Shadwell Street, near Tower Hill, at the sign of the Flag, and let her know his present condition. She is very rich, he says, and has often told him she would at any time do him whatever service she could.

Fisher desires you to look into the *Gazette* and see whether the estate of John Davies, of Goldington and Ravensden, is to be sold.

You would do well to buy a few cheap spelling books if you can meet with any, for they are wanted much at the Castle.

Combes's goods were seized last week, and it is thought he is gone to London.² If he should call on you for what you owe him, put him in mind of paying you for me the twelve shillings he owes me.

I forgot to tell you that I neglected to call at Mrs. Baxter's landlord's. I wish you would bring my picture of Queen Elizabeth to Oxford as carefully as you can. It is in a large box in your sister's closet. There is a play of mine in the box with your linen which I likewise desire you will bring with you. Pray give my love to Charles, best respects to your brother and sister,³ and service to Mrs. Berry⁴ and Miss Nancy.

I am, dear sir,

Your sincere friend and affectionate humble servant,

William Morgan

Pray do not forget to inquire for my pocket book.

Endorsement: by JW, 'W Morgan / Feb. 5. 1730'.

Source: holograph, MARC, MA 1977/610/101.

¹These apparent abbreviated names or nicknames, and other names in this paragraph, are likely all prisoners in the Castle at Oxford.

²Charles Combes was a stationer and printer for Oxford University.

³Samuel Wesley Jr. and his wife Ursula; it is her closet in which the picture was stored. JW & CW had arrived at their home for a visit on Jan. 27.

⁴Ursula (Bentham) Berry (1669–1743), Samuel Jr.'s mother-in-law, who was apparently living with her daughter's family following the death of her husband in 1730.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Sr.

Epworth
February 6[–17], 1731

Dear Son,

I shall first answer your ultimate, and then your penultimate.¹ I thank you for Dr. King.² I find him strong, but too weighty for me. And therefore, like Saul's armor, till I have proved it I cannot make use of it, but must be content with what small stones I had in my own and Mr. Ditton's scrip.³

As for the letter which I had before, I find in it an account of a learned friend of yours who has a great veneration for the Septuagint, and thinks in some places it corrects the present Hebrew copy.⁴ I do not at all wonder he should be of that mind, when it is likely he may have read Vossius⁵ and others who magnify this translation so highly as to depreciate the original. And I must confess I was inclined to the same opinion when I first began in earnest to study the Scriptures, and read over more than once or twice the Septuagint, according to the Vaticane [text], though not then comparing it with the original Hebrew. What then added to my respect for it, and increased it almost to superstition, was that I not only found the sense of many texts in the Scripture, as I thought, more happily explained than in our own or other versions—which is the first thing that is generally taken notice of by those who begin to read it; but likewise there are several words and phrases in the New Testament which can hardly be so well understood without having recourse to this translation; but especially, that it is so frequently quoted both by our Saviour himself and by his apostles, even where it seems to differ from the Hebrew and perhaps does sometimes really differ from it. These considerations, though I since find they have been all weighed and answered by learned men of our own communion as well as others, yet held me so long in a blind admiration of the Septuagint that, though I did not esteem them absolutely infallible, yet I hardly dared trust my own eyes or think they were considerably or frequently mistaken, till upon reading this translation over very often, and comparing them verbatim with the Hebrew, I was forced by plain evidence of fact to be of another mind.

That which led me to it was not so much some mistakes (I think I should not exceed if I should say at least one thousand) in places *indifferent*, either occasioned by the ambiguous sense of some words in the Hebrew, or by the mistake of some *letters*, as η for ϵ , and *vice versa*, which everyone knows are very much alike in the old Hebrew character, and which is a demonstration to me that the LXX translated from such a copy as was written in the same character, namely, that which is now called the Chaldee; and that even the Samaritans transcribed theirs from a copy which was written in the same sort of letters. But that which most moved me and fully determined my judgment was that I found, or thought I found, very many places in this version of the Septuagint, when I came to compare it close with the Hebrew, that appeared to me *purposefully altered*, and that for no very honest, at least justifiable, reasons. These came at last so thick upon me in the course of my daily reading, not only in the Pentateuch but in the Proverbs, the Kings, the major and minor Prophets, that I began to note them down, not a few instances whereof you will see in the following dissertation, which I have been at the pains to get entirely transcribed, and shall

¹I.e., JW's letters of Dec. 11, 1730 (*Works*, 25:257–59), and Jan. 15, 1731 (*Works*, 25:264–67).

²William King (1650–1729), *De Origine Mali* (1702); ET: *An Essay on the Origin of Evil* (1729).

³Humphrey Ditton (1675–1715), whose *Discourse concerning the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (1714) was referenced by JW in his letter of Dec. 11.

⁴This friend is Emanuel Langford (c. 1705–78), who was two years behind JW at Christ Church, Oxford, and completed his MA in 1728 at Hart Hall. Langford became Vicar of Heydour in 1747, serving until his death.

⁵Isaac Vossius (1618–89), *De Septuaginta interpretibus* (1661).

send it to you in my next packet, which I send to your brother at London,⁶ and have ready by me to send by the carrier as soon as I receive my printed prolegomena from him, and would have you communicate it to your learned friend, with my best respects (though unknown to me), earnestly desiring him, as well as you, to peruse it with the greatest prejudice you can. And after you have thoroughly weighed the whole, as I think the subject deserves, to make the strongest objections you are able against any particular article of it where you are not convinced by my observations and reasonings. For I should not deserve any friend if I did not esteem those my best friends who did their endeavours to set me right where I may be possibly mistaken, especially in a matter of so great moment, which is like shortly to appear publicly in the world.

This is all at present, except that, blessed be God, we are all well, and everybody sends respects (and I believe some letters in the packet that comes herewith), as your mother her blessing, and the same

Your loving father,

Sam. Wesley

P.S. February 17, 1731. I desire you'd translate Job's Wife into Latin,⁷ which I believe your brother will send you from Westminster; for though you have business he must have more, now the book is in the press.

Source: holograph; DDWes 6/102 (by amanuensis, only signature in Samuel Sr.'s hand).⁸

⁶Samuel Wesley Jr.

⁷An excursus in Samuel Sr.'s pending magnum opus, *Dissertationes in Librum Jobi* (1736).

⁸Transcription (without P.S.) published in Clarke, *Memoirs* (1836), 2:418–20; (1848), 636–38.

From Emilia Wesley

[Lincoln]
[begun] Feb. 10 [1731]

My Dearest Brother,

Certainly you have wondered at my long silence.¹ And had I been in your place, I should have enquired into the cause of it before now. But since you have not, I will tell you without your asking.

You know I am six or seven weeks at home. What I met with *there*, you are a stranger to. I found the family much happier than ever before in one particular (and that a very substantial one), for my mother never wanted money for housekeeping. That part of the tithe kept in their own hands supplied all necessaries. Nay, and would find our family with conveniences too, now it is so small, was not great part of it devoured by the bottomless pit of my father's debts. Yet still it is better than it has been.

Dick [Ellison] I found deeply engaged, both on my father's part and his own. That is, he has given bonds and accepted bills of my father's creditors as far as his rent went, and owes besides money enough on his own account, that were he to die tomorrow I do not believe he would leave one shilling behind him when his debts were paid. He will surely come to live at Epworth again in a little time, when he has disposed of Hurst.

Sister Polly² was very well in health, somewhat discomposed indeed at my immoderate laughter at her sweetheart John Whitelamb. I never could see them together without smiling, and truly sometimes have laughed near an hour together at their love, to the no small mortification of honest Polly, who cannot discover the least reason why she may not be the wife to a man six feet high as well as any woman in England.

Poor sister [Anne] Lambert has such poor health that I fear she will not live long. Little Jack [John Lambert Jr.] is very well, and very pretty. Sister Patty³ is very healthful, but not like to be married yet. And now I have given you account of all I think that you wish to know.

After my return to Lincoln I reflected so deeply on our Epworth affairs (and especially on my separation from my mother, and how impossible it is while my father lives for me ever to be happy with her, my peaceable temper and his unaccountable love of discord making it absolutely necessary for me to keep from home) that I fell into such a melancholy as I thought would only have ended with my life. Sickness all day and tears every night was my course of life for about a month, and would have been longer had not providence put a stop to my grief by a way somewhat uncommon. The fever made me another visit, but in a new way, for it fell upon my teeth with that violence that for eight days and nights I thought really I should have them distracted, never being able to lie in bed, but either walking in my chamber or sitting by my fire alone, when all our family besides were fast asleep. The solitariness of the nights and uncomfortableness of such a state made me begin to consider that it was very probable my immoderate grief might have occasioned a visitation so extraordinary. That since, when I enjoyed health and all the necessaries of life (my brother Sam having at last lent me what I desired, with which I had paid our apothecary and some debts for Kezia, and was easy in my circumstances) I was so very uneasy because I could not have her company whom I loved so well, now it pleased God to visit me with extraordinary pain as a punishment for my discontent. These thoughts quieted my mind perfectly. And when by a very odd chance I got my health restored, my mind at the same time enjoyed her former tranquillity, leaving to God the disposal of my fortunes and waiting cheerfully for that state where our happiness will have no alloy. You see dear brother, I write to you as if you were my confessor. But your own sweetness of temper and love to me makes me use all possible freedom.

¹JW had last written Emilia on Oct. 30, 1730 (a letter not known to survive).

²A variant of the family nickname for their sister Mary Wesley.

³I.e., Martha Wesley.

Poor Kez[ia] is almost confounded. Between the fever on one hand and the green sickness⁴ on the other, she is always taking some slaps, and yet cannot keep well. I have a fine time on it truly. And to mend the matter, Sam tells me it is better than I could have expected. Every penny I get of her small allowance is looked upon as clear gains to me. But wit is never good, they say, till bought. I am sure I may have a competent share, for I have both bought and paid for it. My father now owes £50 for her Martinmass half year,⁵ and May is near. She wants so many clothes that, had she punctual payment, it would scarcely supply her wants. Poor girl, she wears out clothes full as fast again as I. And I am sure she has no need to do so, but it is some folk's way and they cannot help it. However, I intend to give the ground for agreement, as they say. If it be a trifle to be always in debt for her; and, let me have little money or much, always to be obliged to supply her wants whether I can or no; that trifle I will not do—but will quit Lincoln, rather than bear such usage. At May Day I shall give Mrs. Taylor warning for Martinmas, and so shift for myself the best I can. It is indeed in my power to send her home, but then all my relations' mouths would be opened against me. Providence is everywhere. I do not fear to live, and shall run the hazard.

I hope to see you this spring. Sam knows nothing of my intention to leave Lincoln. Nor shall any of our people till it is past their power to prevent it. Therefore, pray say nothing of it. I hope to hear shortly from you. Pray give my love to Charles, and believe me to be, dear brother,

Your affectionate sister and friend,

E. Wesley

Miss Kitty [Hargreave] sends her service to her man,⁶ and wants his attendance.

March 14, 1730[/31]

Address: 'To John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxford / by way / of London'.

Postmark: '17/MA' and 'Lincoln'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] Em[ilia] March 14 1730 / Lin[coln]'.

Source: holograph; DDWF 6/4.

⁴Chronic anaemia.

⁵That is, the half-yearly stipend, traditionally paid on St. Martin's day (November 11) and Whitsunday.

⁶I.e., CW.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves

[London?]
February 13 [1731]

The few hours that Selima and Aspasia enjoyed the conversation of Cyrus and Araspes are too valuable to be forgot; which I should sooner have endeavoured to convince you of, if I could have found time. And the favour of the book¹ is of so high a nature that we can never be so ungrateful as to look on it without the greatest thankfulness. How happy should we have been to have heard it read by one who so well knows to recommend everything he approves of! I am sensible there must be several things we shall not be able to comprehend in such a treatise; you must therefore give me leave to trouble you with my ignorance, by desiring your explanation of what I may not understand. I hope we shall hear from you soon. I have not time now to enlarge my letter. I must again repeat my acknowledgements for the friendship you have shown us in many instances. Selima and Aspasia will always gratefully remember them.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 25.²

¹Browne's *Human Understanding*; see letters of Dec. 28, 1730, and Feb. 4, 1731.

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:271.

From Martha Wesley

[Epworth]
March 30, 1731

Dear Brother,

I must confess you were much kinder to me than I deserved in answering my letter so soon. And I intended to have followed your example, and have writ[ten] by the next post, but I knew I could not write to you without thinking, and I was quite sick of thought.¹ You have so often blamed me for complaining that you have long since broke me of it (at least of troubling you with my complaints). Yet methinks I'm strongly tempted to trouble you once more, to tell thee all the secrets of my soul, and 'let thee share my most retired distress'.² You know what subjects you used to say I liked so well to talk on. When therefore I begin, you must not expect I shall make an end suddenly. For I intend for once to 'put the woman off and stand revealed'.³

You know how I liked Mr. Johnson when you was here last. You may remember too that I told you I was not engaged to him by promise, nor am I yet. O that I could think I was not in honour neither. But when a man presses a woman to marriage, though she may not say she will have him, yet if she does not positively say she will not I think he may reasonably take it for encouragement. And I don't see how she can come fairly off. I believe my notions in this particular stricter than almost any woman in England. Yet since they are so, I think it is my duty to act accordingly, at least till my judgment is better informed. I have received several letters from Mr. Johnson, one or two of which I think I answered, but with such extraordinary coldness that I could scarce forebear pitying the poor man all the time I was writing him, especially when I considered how much pain it would have given me to have received such letters from anyone I had loved. I think it was about December that I received a letter from him in which he was so honest as to tell me all his friends were against me, and had positively refused to set him up. Though at the same time he took care to make all the professions of love and constancy that a man can be supposed to make to a woman he violently desires. I wrote him word again that I could not blame his friends, that absence would soon make him forget me, and that he might take care to choose one his relations would like better.

I now thought myself entirely disengaged, for though he might have some small reason to think I would marry him if he could get immediately into business, he had not the least shadow of reason to imagine I would stay for him when he told me himself he had not prospect of doing it. Methinks I don't like the word 'stay', because it seems to suppose one to be in haste to go. But I think my dear brother won't suppose that to be my case, since if I don't marry him I can't tell whether or no I shall ever marry anyone as long as I live. The young man above mentioned wisely took about nine months time to consider of my answer before he wrote again, in which time I vainly flatter myself that the violence of his passion had spent itself, and that he might be able to make use of his reason. For I'm so adverse to giving pain to any mortal upon earth that I should have been very glad if his passion had decayed itself, or fixed on another object, since by this means he would not have had any uneasiness. But I might full as reasonably have expected that a man I had loved would have been constant as that one I did not would alter his mind. 'Tis not a fortnight since Johnny Whit[elamb] (whom he employs as his advocate) received a letter from him, in which he told him that his eldest brother had got another living and married a woman of £2000 fortune, that he had writ[ten] to him (I think not positively neither) that he would set him up. He wrote to me too, in his old way, which I fancy now he'll never leave—till he's married. He tells me he has been sick all the winter, which prevented his coming to Epworth, but that he will come (if he's well) as soon as

¹JW's diary shows that the letter to which this replies was written on Mar. 4; suggesting that her prior letter was written about Mar. 1. Neither of these letters appear to survive.

²A line by Marcia from Alexander Pope's play *Cato*, Act I, Scene 6.

³Cf. John Dryden, 'Theodore and Honoria', l. 409.

he hears from his brother again. I shan't know how to do with the troublesome soul. If I could but persuade him to be as good as his word and take shipping for beyond sea, I should be freely shut on him, 'but that's a wish too mighty for my hopes'.⁴ But sailing apart, I would sooner choose even to marry a man I did not love than to make a fool of him. Should I do myself what I have so often blamed in others? No, I can't bear that thought. 'Afflict my soul with any thing but guilt.'⁵

There are indeed two considerations that pretty well reconcile me to the thought of marrying Mr. Johnson. One is that I shall scarce ever be permitted to marry anybody I really love. That happiness 'tis likely would ruin me! And since (humanly speaking) I have nothing to depend upon when my father dies, I may as well be contented with one I am not very fond of now, as stay till I am destitute and then maybe marry a man that neither loves me, nor I him. But the last consideration outweighs all other. When I think seriously that I am but in a journey, and that I don't expect happiness in my way but when I come to my journey's end, I think it does not become me to be so very solicitous which sort of a companion I shall have to go along with me. If I can but have one that won't hinder me in my journey, that won't persuade me to turn aside into the wrong path, I shall so soon be at my journey's end that I need not much concern myself about anything farther.

I readily grant all you say of Mr. Horbery⁶ to be true! And if I can as you say, 'converse with him without being worse', there is indeed no doubt but I may reap much profit, to say nothing of pleasure, by his conversation. But whether I can do that or no is the very question. I am not allowed to be a good judge because 'tis my own case, and consequently not one word I say about the matter is to be believed. But our good people take it for granted that every time I see and talk with Mr. Horbery I love Mr. Johnson so much the less. That what was never set on cannot be said to be taken off does not appear reason to them. Nor does it signify anything at all to say that Mr. Horbery is no more like a lover than he's like the great Turk. The answer to that is ready immediately: 'Tis none of your fault if he's not.' Indeed, I can't say 'tis either of our faults. Nor do I reckon it my misfortune. I am far from wishing for such a trial! I own indeed my soul seems pleased to take acquaintance with him. And if I do now and then, when he comes to our house, engage him in conversation, am I to blame? Since I cannot possibly hear anyone else talk so well as he does, if I judge like a rational creature must I not in my judgment prefer his conversation to that of anyone else? Sister Molly says I am just going after Mrs. Chapone and you,⁷ and she has such mistaken charity for me as to wish to see me buried alive rather than I should love Mr. Horbery as well as Mrs. Chapone does you! I make myself a little merry with her sometimes by telling her if I ever marry Mr. Johnson, Mr. Horbery shall marry me. She tells me 'twill be like the rest of my prudence.

I wish my dear brother would give me his thoughts upon this subject, and tell me what he himself would do if he was in my place. Would not you think it a little hard to refrain the conversation of the only person of your acquaintance that was both willing and able to improve you? And if it would be somewhat hard (as I fancy it would) for you to do, with all your religion and philosophy, think what it will be for me!

You have formerly complained that I did not speak my mind freely enough to you. I think you will never have reason to make that complaint again, since I could not have given you a greater instance of the entire confidence I repose in you than I have done by this letter.

It is well indeed that I can enjoy all the advantage of a strict intimacy with you without the least fear of any ill consequences. Sure it can never be in the power of any accident to which human life is

⁴Cf. John Dryden, *All for Love*, Act II, l. 192.

⁵A line of Phaedra in Edmund Smith's *Phaedra and Hippolitus*, Act I, Scene 1.

⁶JW and others were trying to match Martha with Matthew Horbery (1707–73), son of the vicar of Haxey (just south of Epworth), who had recently received his BA from Lincoln College and been ordained deacon.

⁷Sarah (Kirkham) Chapone, or 'Varanese', whose close friendship with JW was considered inappropriate by his family for a married woman.

liable to lessen the friendship I have for my dear brother. Nay, I can't think 'twill be in the power of even death itself to do it! Shall I love him less when he will deserve even more than he does now? When he shall be perfect as an angel of God? And when I myself shall be 'delivered from the bondage of corruption',⁸ and shall be free from any infirmity which may make me unworthy of his friendship.

My thoughts have been so employed of late with the difficulty of performing my own duty that I have had little leisure to persuade my neighbours to their's, though I had some talk not long since with Nancy Dixon and N. Taylor about the sacrament. Nancy Dixon promised me as before that she would receive it as soon as she was sixteen. But the other, though past sixteen, said she was too young. I would gladly persuade both her and her sister to communicate this Easter; but I fear I shan't be able.

I take it as a great instance of your friendship that you should desire to improve my knowledge so much, but I doubt it must not be. 'All otherwise to me my thoughts portend.'⁹

I should almost be tempted to wish Johnny Whitelamb might not be able to get to Oxford this term, if this might be a means of our seeing you, for I want sadly to see you. You may perhaps be inclined to laugh at this letter, which if you are I make it my request to you that you would not give it a second reading, but that you would burn it, and I shall not trouble you with such another.

I am, dear brother,

Your ever faithful friend and sister,

Martha Wesley

I want the book of verses to transcribe out on sadly.

You see I take you at your word; your paper (?) is much better than my brother Sam's.

I once knew a pretty sort of a youth at Oxford called Mr. Charles Wesley. I should be glad to hear that he is yet in the land of the living.

Sister Molly desired me to tell you she will write if she can get time, but she can't tell whether she can or no. She's working for John Whitelamb.

[added later]

I was writing this letter to send by the post, but company came and prevented me getting it done, so I stayed till John Whitelamb went before I sent it.

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon / By way of London'.

Postmark: none.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] P[atty] March 1. [sic.] 1731'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 12/4.¹⁰

⁸Rom. 8:21.

⁹John Milton, 'Samson Agonistes', l. 589.

¹⁰Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 25:272–73.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves

New Bond Street [London]
April 4, 1731

In what manner can I make an excuse to Cyrus for being so long without acknowledging the favour of his last letter?¹ By this time he certainly repents of the great indulgence he has shown me. When I consider how every hour of your life is employed, either in your own improvement or bestowing part of your knowledge on those who are happily placed under your care; and that notwithstanding the difficulty it is for you to command any time to yourself, you have always remembered me in the most obliging manner, and have studied not only how to entertain but to improve me; when I recollect all this, have I not reason to fear the loss of your good opinion? And that you think me unworthy of your favour and advice? That surrounded by vanity and impertinence, I am fallen into the snare, and refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he ne'er so wisely! God forbid my state should be so desperate as to prefer sin and folly to virtue and wisdom! I will sincerely tell you the truth, and trust to your mercy. All the acquaintances I almost have are now in town. They are continually soliciting us either to come to them, or they will come to us. My sister being soon to leave me, all her friends endeavour to give her as much entertainment as they can; by which means our time is so entirely engrossed that for two months past we have lived in a perpetual hurry, and shall do so for the month to come. I would not have you imagine we have neglected the book; whatever comes with your recommendation is of too much value to be neglected. But the subject of it is too elevated to be read in a hurry; next week I hope we shall have leisure to read and reflect. I am a little at a loss for some words, not being used to shorthand, but I believe I shall be able to find them out.²

Every Sunday evening there is a gentleman in this town has a concert of music. I am invited there tonight, and design to go. I charge you, on the friendship you have professed for me, tell me your sincere opinion about it, and all your objections. For if I am in an error by going, you ought to prevent my doing so again.

Dear Varanese I have not heard from a great while. Why are we denied the happiness and advantage of conversing with such a friend? Araspes may justly claim our service and esteem. Selima joins with Aspasia in being to Cyrus,

A faithful and obliged friend.

I have hardly confidence to expect a return to this.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 27–28.³

¹The monthly summary in JW's diary for Mar. 1731 shows that he had written to her that month (apparently early in the month) the letter to which she here replies in terms which reveal its challenging contents.

²Apparently the occasional symbols in Wesley's abbreviated longhand, in which he penned his extract of Peter Browne's *The Procedure, Extent, and limits of Human Understanding* (1728).

³Transcription published in *Works*, 25:273–74.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.¹

[Westminster?]
[April 28, 1731]

Dear Jack,

I can easily allow that you and Charles *do* more business than I, but I can by no means own that you have more *to do*. Great part of what I should do I often let alone, though I am sorry for it afterwards. I designed to have wrote by Mr. Bateman,² to whom I read part of your last letter concerning the execrable consultation in order to stop the progress of religion by giving it a false name. He lift[ed] up his hands and eyes, and protested he could not have believed such a thing. He gave [William] Morgan a very good character, and said he should always think himself obliged to him for the pains he took in reclaiming a young pupil of his who was just got into ill company, and upon the brink of destruction. Who Mr. B. is I don't well know, for sure it cannot be any man who has any notions of duty himself. I don't like your being called a club; that name is really calculated to do mischief. And methinks I would studiously avoid every particularity as far as possible, lest the matter itself should suffer for the manner of doing good. But the other charge of enthusiasm can weigh with none but such as drink away their sense, or never had any; for surely activity in social duties and strict attendance upon the ordained means of grace are the strongest guards imaginable against it.

I went to call upon Dr. Terry,³ in order to desire him to subscribe to Job,⁴ but did not meet with him. And in two or three days, *O rem ridiculam et jocosam*,⁵ he did me the favour to call upon me; which I was so obliged to him for that I would not then chagrin him with desiring him to part with money. I told him I hoped my two brothers 'have still good characters at Oxford'. He said it now lay out of his way, but he believed so. Quoth I, 'No news is good news', he 'must needs have heard anything remarkable.' He believed again they were studious and sober. When he was got downstairs, without the door to the steps, he turns about and says, 'I think I have heard your brothers are exemplary, and take a great [deal] of pains to instil good principles into young people.' I told him, and you may guess I told him truth, I was very glad to hear such a character of them, especially from him.

Mr. Hutchison brings you this.⁶ The gentleman who carries it to him has just called upon me, so I don't know how long time I shall have to finish it. I have wrote to my father that I intend to go down to him at Bartholomew-tide (or rather this summer, without naming the time), which I suppose will stop all thoughts of his coming up before I see Epworth at least, and then we may discourse of the matter at large. I have the names of twenty subscribers of yours, but not their titles and dignities, as reverend, and (<...>

Endorsement: by JW at top of first page, 'Apr. 28, 1731'.

Source: holograph; London, Wesley's Chapel, LDWMM 2000/1962/10.⁷

¹A reply to JW's missing letter of Mar. 29, in which he described persecution beginning against the Oxford Methodists. Cf. JW's letter to Rev. Joseph Hoole of May 18, 1731 (*Works*, 25:341–42).

²Possibly Edmund Bateman, a fellow student at Christ Church, one year ahead of JW.

³Rev. Dr. Thomas Terry (c. 1678–1735), Regius Professor of Greek, and Canon of Christ Church.

⁴I.e., the publication of Samuel Sr.'s magnum opus, *Dissertationes in Librum Jobi*.

⁵'A droll and amusing situation'; Caius Catullus, Poem 56.

⁶Apparently Archibald Hutcheson (1661–1740); see *Works*, 25:467.

⁷The manuscript is missing the second sheet; transcription published in *Works*, 25:278–79.

From Ann Granville

Gloucester
May 8, 1731

I had rather expose my own ignorance in writing than not hear from Cyrus and Araspes, whose letters give so much pleasure and improvement to your friends. Besides, at present I have my mother's commands to warrant my own inclination. She orders me to be very particular in her acknowledgments for the last letter she received from Oxford. We were extremely vexed when we came there to find our agreeable friends had left it. Except that disappointment our journey was as prosperous as we could wish. But my sister was not with us. The weakness we felt at parting we endeavoured to correct by saying, Would not Cyrus blame us for this? The reflection dried our tears, but I must confess sincerely, it did not ease our pain. Is not this wrong in us? Did I (for my sister has more fortitude) make a proper progress in Christianity the things of this world would certainly be more indifferent to me than I find they are. How shall I learn the happiness of being above trifles? Nobody can so well point out the way to me as yourself. But I could not make such a request did I not know how ready you are to do good.

I have not had the pleasure of a letter since I came home from valuable Sappho,¹ but I have heard she is well. My sister and I answered for her dear little girl, but she is in the hands of a person more capable of instructing her. I suppose you have heard from my sister by this time. If not, you must excuse her, because she is at present very much taken with some business in order to a little ramble she goes upon this summer. We were prodigiously obliged to you for the book you favoured us with.² The greatest objection I had to London was that I had no time to read it. My sister and I almost quarrelled about it when I came away; but she promised to send it me when she had read it. There are some words puzzle us, not understanding shorthand. We must beg of you to explain them, for we can't consent to lose one word.

I am often angry with some of our neighbours, who, impertinently civil, take up more of my time than I am willing to bestow upon them. I am now guilty of the same fault, and write on without considering how many useful good things I may prevent your doing. But I will make no excuses, because I hope you look upon my errors as a friend. Show me you are so by telling me as freely of them as I assure Cyrus and Araspes that I am,

Your most faithful friend and humble servant.

My mother's best wishes attend the good brothers.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Selima' Letter-book, 1–3.³

¹Sarah (Kirkham) Chapone.

²Peter Browne's *The Procedure, Extent, and limits of Human Understanding* (1728).

³Transcription published in *Works*, 25:279–80.

From the Rev. Joseph Hoole¹

[Haxey, Lincolnshire?]
[c. May 29,] 1731

Good Sir,

A pretty while after the date yours came to my hand. I waived my answer till I had an opportunity of consulting your father, who, upon all accounts, is a more proper judge of the affair than I am. But I could never find a fit occasion for it. As to my own sense of the matter, I confess I cannot but heartily approve that serious and religious turn of mind that prompts you and your associates to those pious and charitable offices; and can have no notion of that man's religion or concern for the honour of the university that opposes you as far as your design respects the colleges. I should be loath to send a son of mine to any seminary where his conversing with virtuous young men, whose professed design of meeting together at proper times was to assist each other in forming good resolutions, and encouraging one another to execute them with constancy and steadiness, was inconsistent with any received maxims or rules of life among the members. As to the other branch of your design, as the town is divided into parishes, each of which has its proper incumbent, and as there is probably an ecclesiastic who has the spiritual charge of the prisoners, prudence may direct you to consult them. For though I dare not say you would be too officious should you of your own mere motion seek out the persons that want your instructions and charitable contributions, yet should you have the concurrence of their proper pastor, your good offices would be more regular and less liable to censure.

Source: extract published by JW in *Journal* 1, Preface.²

¹Replying to JW's letter of May 18, 1731 describing the opposition growing in Oxford against the 'Methodists' (*Works*, 25:341–42). Hoole held an MA from Sidney College, Cambridge; served as vicar of Haxey, 1712–37; then as rector of St. Ann's church, Manchester, until his death. See *Alumni Catabrigienses*.

²*Works*, 18:130–31.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

[Westminster]
[c. June 15,] 1731

Dear Brother,

I think you are now in that state, wherein he who is not for you is against you. The interrupting your meeting is, doubtless, in order to letting it alone for good. And although I do not know how often you met together, yet I would rather straiten than slacken the string now, if it might be without breaking. I cannot say I thought you always in everything right; but I must now say, rather than you and Charles should give over your whole course, especially what relates to the Castle,¹ I would choose to follow either of you, nay both of you, to your graves. I cannot advise you better than in the words I proposed for a motto to a pamphlet, Στήθ' ἑδραῖος ὡς ἀκμῶν τυπτόμενος, καλοῦ γὰρ ἀθλητοῦ δέρεθαι καὶ νικᾶν.² 'Stand thou steadfast as a beaten anvil; for it is the part of a good champion to be flayed alive, and to conquer.'

Source: JW published extract; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 129.

¹The prison in Oxford, where the Methodists were visiting prisoners.

²Ignatius, *Letter to Polycarp*, 3.1.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves¹

[London?]
June 16 [1731]

Without the highest vanity, how can I suppose my correspondence of so much consequence as to give Cyrus any pleasure? I have no occasion to think it, but from your own words. And can I doubt your truth? No carty.²

I will not say I envied either Varanese or Cyrus those moments they passed together, for indeed I did not; but happy should I have been to have shared them with you. How I please myself with the thoughts that I was not quite forgot at that interview; perhaps I was wished for.

How differently were my hours employed just at that time! Instead of meeting with a favourite friend, I parted from one, my dearest Selima. I want her every moment, particularly when I am alone. Her conversation softened every care. But I own it is ungrateful for me to repine at her absence; my mother can't be happy without her, and I ought to resign her with cheerfulness. My natural disposition is hasty and impatient under disappointments; but your example and precepts have already corrected some part of that inexcusable temper, and I owe you my best thanks for many tranquil hours which I should not have had without that amendment.

The common conversation of the world disgusts me extremely; but I am not only disgusted at some principles which I find too much encouraged, but really afflicted. I know men of excellent understanding, learning, humanity, in short endowed with all the agreeable qualities that can be desired, and not destitute of good ones: but talk to them of religion and they maintain an opinion that shocks me to hear it. They allow our Saviour to be a great prophet, but divest him of divinity; admire the Scripture, but call every part that mentions the Trinity fictitious. I have one friend in particular of this opinion. He is in every other respect a most amiable man: in all moral duties none can excel him; the best husband, friend, master, son; charitable without the least ostentation; has a fine understanding, the greatest politeness, without the least tincture of vanity. What do you say that man's state is with regard to the next world?

Company is come in, and prevents my saying any more; but I shall be glad to hear soon from you. My service attends Araspes. I am,

Your obliged friend,

Aspasia

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 44–46.³

¹Replying to JW's of June 2 (*Works*, 25:280–81).

²I.e., 'certy'; perhaps from *certes*. See *OED*.

³Transcription published in *Works*, 25:284.

From Emilia Wesley

[Lincoln]
June 26 [1731]

Dear Brother,

Your last letter surprised me exceedingly.¹ And I assure you, you had need of all your interest in my heart, I will not say to induce me to comply with your desires, but even to write to you any more. I always measured your love by my own, and as I am very sure your interest would be ever preferred by me, not only to that of all my relations and acquaintances (except my dear mother) but even to my own, so it concerned me to the last degree to find that your affection should be so much greater for Mrs. Taylor² than for her who you hitherto flattered with the title of your best loved sister and dearest friend.

You are a little mistaken in your judgment of our affairs. Had I pursued my own designs, it would not have proved such a disadvantage to Mrs. Taylor as you suppose. Her school flourished before I came and would probably be the same were I gone. Gainsborough would, 'tis true, be struck off from Lincoln and the Isle [of Axholme].³ The latter would not send one, but on my account we have not one from now I am here. So the loss could not be great. I know Mrs. Taylor had rather I should stay than go. She loves not change, that's one thing. And then I have long been used to the business, that's another. Besides the old proverb that 'seldom comes a better'. Further reasons that these I cannot apprehend she has to desire the keeping me. Neither do I believe there is any.

For my part, I begin to grow superstitious, and fancy 'tis not the will of providence that I should ever do more than just live. That I never must know the satisfaction of a bed of my own to lie in till my last bed of clay, or sure before this I should have been settled for myself and had known what I had to trust to. But be it as it may. Life flies fast away, and will soon be over.

Let the providential part of the matter be forgot. I have given that to your love [that] I could not yield to your arguments, and have once more laid aside all thoughts of leaving Lincoln. And be it better or worse for me, your will shall be obeyed, for I love you too well to contradict your inclinations. But give me leave to ask you these questions: [1] Whether it is prudent for you to enter into such engagements to a sister, when 'tis probable you will marry and will have occasion for all you have yourself? 2) Whether, should Mrs. Taylor die before me, I having neglected the opportunity of providing for old age purely to oblige you, you are not obliged by conscience and honour to make amends for the effects of your counsel? 3) Whether, should the case (mentioned above) happen of her death, and I old and poor stand in need of an annual support from you, you would cheerfully grant it or rather curse your own management for bringing such inconveniences on yourself when they might have been so easily avoided. And so, farewell Gainsborough, etc.

I am glad you met with so much good company at Stanton,⁴ but wish you would lay aside that foolish, ridiculous custom of walking. Were your slim corpse able to sustain such hardships, which it is not, yet the mean scurvy appearance is reason sufficient against it. I take the precept of St. Paul to Timothy, 'Let no man despise thee',⁵ as a positive precept binding all clergy. For which reason, all actions, dress, etc., which naturally cause contempt ought to be avoided (by them) out of strict duty. Now

¹This letter, apparently responding to Emilia's letter begun on Feb. 10 and mailed mid March, does not survive.

²Mrs. Taylor ran the school in Lincoln where Emilia had been teaching, and was threatening to resign.

³JW had learned that Emilia's plan, on leaving Mrs. Taylor's school in Lincoln, was to set up her own school in Gainsborough.

⁴Stanton, Gloucestershire, home of the Kirkham family.

⁵1 Tim. 4:12.

I leave it to your own judgment whether a clergyman, and fellow of a college, walking 100 miles does not look more like a foot-post than a pillar of the Church of England!

I don't doubt but you have heard of Patty being gone to live with Matt.⁶ What work he will make with her principles I know not. She seems pretty much already in his way of thinking. My mother has writ[ten] to me, to know whether I think I could be convinced again to live at home. But as the proverb says, 'two words to a bargain'. However, I hope to spend part of the winter with her to content her. I am, dear brother,

Your most affectionate sister,

Emilia Wesley

Mrs. Taylor gives her service to you.
And Miss Kitty [Hargreave] to you and her man.⁷

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] E[milia] June 26. 1731. / s[he] will stay w[ith] Mrs Taylor at my desire'.
Source: holograph; Drew University, Methodist Library, Archives.

⁶I.e., Martha has moved to live with their uncle Matthew Wesley in London.

⁷CW.

From Kezia Wesley¹

Lincoln
July 3, 1731

Dear Brother,

I should have writ[ten] sooner had not business and indisposition of body prevented me. Indeed, sister Pat's² going to London shocked me a little, because it was unexpected, and perhaps may have been the occasion of my ill health the last fortnight. It would not have had so great an effect upon my mind if I had known it before. But it is over now:

The past as nothing we esteem;
And pain, like pleasure, is but dream.³

I should be glad to see Norris's *Reflections of the Conduct of Human Understanding*, and the book writ[ten] by the female author.⁴ But I don't expect so great a satisfaction as the seeing either of them except you should have the good fortune for me as to be at Epworth when I am there, which will be the latter end of August, and shall stay a fortnight or three weeks if no unforeseen accident prevent it. I must not expect anything that will give me so much pleasure as the having your company so long, because a disappointment would make me very uneasy.⁵

Had your supposition been true, and one of our fine ladies had heard your conference, they would have despised you for a mere ill-bred scholar who could make no better a use of such an opportunity than preaching to young women for the improvement of their minds.

I am entirely of your opinion that the pursuit of knowledge and virtue will most improve the mind. But how to pursue these is the question. Cut off I am, indeed, from all means which most men, and many women, have of attaining them. I have Nelson's method of devotion, and *The Whole Duty of Man*, which is all my stock.⁶ As to history and poetry, I have not so much as one book. I could like to read all the books you mentioned if it were in my power to buy them. But as it is not at present, nor have I any acquaintance that I can borrow them of, I must make myself easy without them if I can. But I had rather you had not told me of them, because it always occasioned me some uneasiness that I had not books and opportunity to improve my mind. Now here I have time, in a morning three or four hours, but want books. At home I had books and no time, because constant illness made me incapable of study.

¹This letter, apparently in response to JW's of June 19 (which does not survive), demonstrates the extension of his tutorial responsibilities in a strengthening of what became a lifelong dedication to female education, apparently sparked by the discovery of Sally Chapone's copy of Mary Astell's *Serious Proposal to Ladies* (see *Works*, 25:285–86).

²I.e., Martha ('Patty') Wesley.

³Samuel Wesley Jr., 'The Cobbler', ll. 13–14 (published later in *Poems on Several Occasions* [London: S. Birt, 1736], 214).

⁴John Norris, *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life: with Reference to Learning and Knowledge* (London: Samuel Manship, 1690); and Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest* (London: R. Wilkin, 1694).

⁵There are no paragraph breaks in the original.

⁶Robert Nelson, *The Practice of True Devotion, in Relation to the End, as well as the Means of Religion; with an Office for the Holy Communion* (London: Joseph Downing, 1715); and Richard Allestree, *The Practice of Christian Graces; or, The Whole Duty of Man laid down in a Plain and Familiar Way for the Use of all, but especially the meanest reader* (London: D. Maxwell, 1657).

I like Nelson's method, the aiming every day at some particular virtue. I wish you would send me the questions you spake of relating to each virtue, and I would read them every day. Perhaps they may be of use to me in learning contentment, for I have been long endeavouring to practise it; yet every temptation is apt to cause me to fall into the same error.

I should be glad if you would say a little to sister Emily on the same subject, for she is very likely to have a fit of sickness with grieving for the loss of Miss Emery, who went to [High] Wycombe last Saturday to live. I can't persuade her to the contrary, because I am so much addicted to the same failing myself. Pray desire brother Charles to bring Prior, the second part,⁷ when he comes; or send it, according to promise, for my leaving off snuff till next May; or else I shall think myself at liberty to take, as soon as I please.

Pray let me know in your next letter when you design to come down, and whether brother Wesley and sister⁸ will come with you; if you intend to walk, and brother Charles with you.

I think it no great matter whether I say anything relating to the people of Epworth or no, for you may be sure he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. I expect you will come by London. Pray, desire sister Pat to write by you. I have not heard from her since she went. You must not measure the length of your next letter by mine. I am ill, and can't write any more.

Your affectionate sister,

Kezia Wesley

Miss Kitty [Hargreave] went to 6 o'clock prayers till she got the fever, and I never miss except sickness prevent me.

Lincoln, July 3, 1731

Source: holograph; Bristol Wesley D6/1/180.⁹

⁷Matthew Prior, *Poems on Several Occasions*, vol. 2 (London: J. Tonson & J. Barber, 1721).

⁸I.e., Samuel Jr. and Ursula Wesley.

⁹Slightly abridged transcription published in *Works*, 25:289–90.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

[Epworth]
July 12, [1]731

Dear Jacky,

I am sorry to put you to the expense of another letter so soon, but I'm so uneasy about poor John Whitelamb that I hope you will excuse it. I presently desired your father to give him one of those guineas you mentioned in yours by Mr. Horbery,¹ and he very readily consented to it, being I believe much pleased with Whitelamb's letter to him.² This I hope will be some small relief, though it can bear no proportion to his great necessities. I am glad you have chosen Mr. [Euseby] Isham your rector, for I think he is friendly to you, as the late rector was, and perhaps you may have power to get something for poor starving Johnny, whose deplorable case I have much at heart, and do daily most earnestly recommend to divine providence, for I know what a great temptation it is to want food convenient.

The particulars of your father's fall are as follows. On Friday before Whit Sunday (the 4th of June) he and I, Molly,³ and young Nanny Brown, were going in our wagon to see the ground we hire of Mrs. Knight at Low Melwood. He sat in a chair at one end of the wagon, I in another at the other end, Molly between us, and Nanny behind me. Just before we reached the Close, going down a small hill, the horses took into a gallop. Out flew your father, and his chair. Nanny, seeing the horses run, hung all her weight on my chair, and kept me from keeping him company. She cried out to William to stop the horses, and that her master was killed. The fellow leapt out of the seat and stayed the horses, then ran to Mr. Wesley. But ere he got to him Harry Dixon, who was coming from Ferry, Mrs. Knight's man, and Jack Glew, were providentially met together, and raised his head, upon which he had pitched, and held him backward, by which means he began to respire, for 'tis certain by the blackness in his face that he had never drawn breath from the time of his fall till they helped him up. By this time I was got to him, asked him how he did, and persuaded him to drink a little ale, for we had brought a bottle with us. He looked prodigiously wild, but began to speak, and told me he ailed nothing. I informed him of his fall. He said he knew nothing of any fall, he was as well as ever he was in his life. We bound up his head, which was very much bruised, and helped him into the wagon, and set him at the bottom of it while I supported his head between my hands, and Will led the horses softly home. I sent presently for Mr. Harper,⁴ who took a good quantity of blood from him, and then he began to feel pain in several parts, particularly in his side and shoulder. He had a very ill night, but on Saturday morning Mr. Harper came again to him, dressed his head, and gave him something which much abated the pain in his side. We repeated the dose at bedtime, and on Whit Sunday he preached twice, and gave the sacrament, which was too much for him to do, but nobody could dissuade him from it. On Monday he was ill, slept almost all day. On Tuesday the gout came, but with two or three nights taking Bateman⁵ it went off again, and he has since been better than could be expected. We thought at first the wagon had gone over him, but it only went over his gown sleeve, and the nails took a little skin off of his knuckles, but did him no further hurt.

¹Euseby Isham (1697–1755) was elected rector of Lincoln College on July 9, so JW's letter conveying this information must have been carried to Epworth by Matthew Horbery between then and the 12th.

²Whitelamb, Samuel Wesley Sr.'s former assistant, had recently matriculated at Lincoln College, Oxford and wrote to Samuel on June 30, 1731, describing the progress of his studies and his spiritual life.

³Mary Wesley.

⁴Robert Harper was currently working as an apothecary in Epworth; he would marry Emilia Wesley in June 1735.

⁵'Dr. Bateman's pectoral drops' were a recently advertised treatment of gout; cf. Benjamin Okell, *A Short Treatise of the Virtues of Dr. Bateman's Pectoral Drops* (Northampton: R. Raikes, 1724).

My brother Wesley⁶ had designed to have surprised us and had travelled under a feigned name from London to Gainsborough. But there sending his man out to see for a guide into the Isle⁷ next day, which was Thursday, the man told one that keeps our market his master's name and that he was going to see his brother, which was minister of Epworth. The man thus informed met with Molly in the market about an hour before my brother got thither; she, full of the news, hastened home and told us her uncle Wesley was coming to see us, but we could hardly believe her. 'Twas odd to observe how all the town took the alarm and were upon the gaze as if some great prince had been about to make his entry. He rode directly to John Dawson's, but we had soon notice of his arrival and sent John Brown with an invitation to our house. He expressed some displeasure at his servant for letting us know of his coming, for he intended to have sent for Mr. Wesley to dine with him at Dawson's and then come to visit us in the afternoon. However, he soon followed John home, where we were all ready to receive him with great satisfaction. His behaviour among us was perfectly civil and obliging. He spoke little to the children the first day,⁸ being employed (as he afterwards told them) in observing their carriage and seeing how he liked them. But afterwards he was very free and expressed great kindness to them all. He was strangely scandalized at the poverty of our furniture and much more at the meanness of the children's habit. He always talked more freely with your sisters of our circumstances than to me and told them he wondered what his brother had done with his income, for it was visible he had not spent it in furnishing his house or clothing his family. We had a little talk together sometimes, but it was not often we could hold a private conference, and he was very shy of speaking anything relative to the children before your father, or indeed of any other matter. I informed him as far as I handsomely⁹ could of our losses, etc., for I was afraid lest he should think I was about to beg of him, but the girls (with whom he had many private discourses) I believe told him everything they could think on. He was particularly pleased with Patty,¹⁰ and one morning before Mr. Wesley came down, he asked me if I was willing to let Patty go and stay a year or two with him at London. 'Sister', says he, 'I have endeavoured already to make one of your children easy while she lives,¹¹ and if you please to trust Patty with me, I will endeavour to make her so, too.' Whatever others may think, I thought this a generous offer, and the more so because he had done so much for Suky and Hetty.¹² I expressed my gratitude as well as I could and would have had him speak to your father, but he would not himself; he left that to me. Nor did he ever mention it to Mr. Wesley till the evening before he left us.

He always behaved himself very decently at family prayers and in your father's absence said grace for us before and after meat. Nor did he ever interrupt our privacy, but went into his own chamber when we went into ours. He stayed from Thursday till the Wednesday after, then left us to go to Scarborough. From whence he returned the Saturday sennight¹³ after, intending to stay with us a few days. But finding your sisters gone the day before to Lincoln, he would leave us on Sunday morning, for he said he might see the girls before they set forward for London. He overtook them at Lincoln and had Mrs. Taylor, Em[ilia], Kez[ia], with the rest to supper with him at the Angel.¹⁴ On Monday they

⁶I.e., her brother-in-law, Matthew Wesley.

⁷The Isle of Axholme, local designation for the fen-surrounded area where Epworth was situated.

⁸Martha (25) and Mary (35) would have been the only Wesley 'children' still at home at this time.

⁹I.e., 'appropriately'.

¹⁰Martha.

¹¹Probably a reference to the £500 gift Matthew made to Mehetabel on the occasion of her (forced) marriage to William Wright.

¹²Matthew took in and cared for Susanna Jr. and Mehetabel after the rectory fire in Feb. 1709.

¹³'Seven nights'; i.e., a week.

¹⁴Emilia and Kezia were employed at Mrs. Taylor's school in Lincoln.

breakfasted with him; then they parted, expecting to see him no more till they came to London, but on Wednesday he sent his man to invite them to supper at night. On Thursday he invited them to dinner, at night to supper, and on Friday morning to breakfast, when he took his leave of them and rode for London. They got into town on Saturday about noon, and that evening Patty writ me an account of her journey.

Before Mr. Wesley went to Scarborough I informed him of what I knew of Mr. Morgan's case.¹⁵ When he came back he told me that he had tried the spa at Scarborough, and could assure me that it far excelled all the spas in Europe, for he had been at them all, both in Germany and elsewhere. That at Scarborough there were two springs, as he was informed, close together, which flowed into one basin, the one a chalybeate,¹⁶ the other a purging water, and that he did not believe there was the like in any part of the world. Says he, 'If that gentleman you told me of could by any means be gotten thither, though his age is the most dangerous time in life for his distemper, yet I am of opinion those waters would cure him.' I thought good to tell you this, that you might if you please inform Mr. Morgan of it, if 'tis proper.

The matter of the tithe stands thus. You know Charles Tate died about Easter. His sons after his death desired Mr. Wesley to continue them in partnership this year, which he granted. But afterwards, when the great drought had consumed most of the flax, they sued for a release, of which I was glad, though he was nothing pleased; yet however he released them, and now we have it all in our own hands. This has thrown us into more debt for two horses and another wagon, but still I hope we shall do pretty well, for though line¹⁷ fails, we are likely to have a large crop of barley, which they say will bear a good price.

This new turn in our affairs will make it very expedient for Em[i]ly to come home, for I cannot manage both house and tithe, and though Molly be a good girl, she is unequal to the work. If Mr. Wesley will but agree with her I shall be very glad; if not, I doubt he must let his tithe. I am old and infirm, and can't do as I have done, therefore must have help, or drop the business.

Your father has let Wroot tithe to Will Atkinson this year, and a brave year he is like to have. But he would not take Canby ground off our hands, so we have burned near twenty acre of it, which if it please God to bless and to send us a good crop of rapes,¹⁸ we may come to get something by that unfortunate bargain at last.

Dear Jacky, I can't stay now to talk about Hetty, and Patty; only this, I hope better of both than some others do.

I pray God to bless you.

Adieu.

[A note added to Charles Wesley]

Address: 'For The Revd. Mr John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln, Oxon. By way of London'.

Postmark: '12/IY' Charges: ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW; 'm[y] f[at]he[r]'s Fall'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 2/8.¹⁹

¹⁵William Morgan, a founding member of the Oxford Methodists, had recently become both physically and mentally ill, during his final year of studies. He would die in August 1732.

¹⁶A mineral spring, typically reddish in color, containing iron salts.

¹⁷An archaic name for flax, from which we get 'linen'.

¹⁸Related to turnips, rapes are a fast growing forage plant that is seeded in the fall.

¹⁹Transcription (with significant elisions) published in *Works*, 25:291–92. The full text appears in Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 145–48.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves¹

New Bond Street [London]
July 21, 1731

The frequent interruptions that have happened to my correspondence with Cyrus I cannot place among my little disappointments, for indeed I have been heartily mortified by it; not so much for the loss I have had of an agreeable entertainment as the fear that you should censure me for it, and perhaps (though I believe it would be unwillingly) tax me with ingratitude. As I endeavour in every respect to guide all my words and actions by the rule of truth, even the most minute circumstances of my life, I must tell Cyrus the real cause of my silence, though at the same time I don't think I can excuse (at least to myself) the having so long neglected answering your letters, and fear when I have told you my manner of spending the last two months you may condemn me as much as I do myself. My brother, whose company I am so happy as to enjoy in the house with me, takes up so much of my time in the morning that I with great difficulty find leisure to write to Gloucester. As I am no housekeeper, I seldom dine at home, but either go to my uncle's, or to some particular friend, who will not let me spend one day entirely at home since my sister left me. Besides this, a gentleman and lady that I have a great regard for, who have left England about a week, engrossed so much of my time in going with them to see all the remarkable seats about London, and to shops to assist them in buying of clothes and furniture, that I have lived as much in a hurry as if I was immediately to take a long journey. To add to this, the thoughts I have of following them the next month (for they are gone to Ireland) has furnished me with new materials for employment. This is the true state of my case, and now I have troubled you with this impertinent account, am I guilty or not guilty? Ah, too guilty, I fear! that could not find in all that trifling hurry one moment's leisure to satisfy my mind in a rational way. But I hope you will forgive a fault that has had no ill consequence on your side. Your not hearing from me has done you no wrong: I indeed have suffered by it.

The imputation thrown upon you is a most extraordinary one. But such is the temper of the world; wh[en] they have no vice to feed their spleen with they will condemn the highest virtue. O Cyrus, how noble a defence you make, and how are you adorned with the beauty of holiness! You really are in a state to be envied. But you deserve the happiness you possess, and far be it from me to envy such excellence. I may aspire after some part of it: how ardently do I wish to be as resigned and humble as Cyrus! I am not presumptuous enough (knowing too well I never can attain it) to desire the knowledge and strength of reason that you are endowed with by nature, and that you have carefully cultivated and improved. But I pray to God to give me a humble and contrite spirit, and to let me taste of the crumbs that fall from his table. 'I believe! Lord, help thou my unbelief!'

As you say, my lot is fallen among those who cannot be accused of too much strictness in religion; so far from that that they generally make an open profession of having no religion at all. I can't observe my fellow creatures in such manifest danger without feeling an inexpressible concern. But God in his good time may make them sensible of their blindness, and call them into a state of salvation.

When I am in Dublin, which will be three weeks or a month hence, I doubt my correspondence will meet with more interruptions than it has hitherto. But in the meantime, to make me some amends, I promise to answer your letters as soon as I receive them. I am afraid when you come to town I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you, because I am to go out of town some days before I begin my great journey. I shall think myself very fortunate if I am not, when you come hither. Our friend Varanese is very well, as a letter informed me last post. I have just had time to finish this letter in a hasty manner. Company is come, and will not allow me a longer conversation. I cannot always submit to this sort of life. It encroaches too much. Adieu.

I hope to hear soon, for I am in some doubt and concern about my late silence, and fear this letter is not powerful enough to dissipate those suspicions my past behaviour may have occasioned. Cyrus has

¹Replying to JW's of July 19 (*Works* 25:293–94).

no friend in the world that wishes him happiness more sincerely than does
His faithful and obliged,

Aspasia

Assure Araspes of the same.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 41–44.²

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:295–96.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves¹

[London]
July 29 [1731]

I wish it could have been otherwise, but I doubt I shall not be in town when Cyrus is there. I am now in the country, and shall stay a fortnight longer. To make myself some amends I lay hold of the first opportunity to write; and to convince you that when I have not been regular in my answers to your letters it has been my fault. Though my not being at home is a reason why I have not much time at command, what leisure I have I dedicate to Cyrus. While I read your letters I find myself carried above the world. I view the vanities I left behind with the disdain that is due to them, and wish never to return to them; but as it is my lot to dwell among them as yet, I will at least endeavour to defend myself from their assaults; and with your assistance I hope to baffle and turn aside their sting. But as from every evil we may extract a good, so in this particular I have great consolation, that weak and insignificant as I am, I have sometimes found means of maintaining the honour of our great God when I have heard the blasphemers say, 'Where is now their God?' At such an instant, how have I wished for a capacity equal to the mighty cause! For Cyrus's wisdom and words!

There is a young lady, a particular friend of mine, who by all that I can judge of her behaviour omits no duty either to God or man, but is so discontented with herself that she is upon the brink of despair. I believe her in an ill state of health, and that may contribute to her melancholy. I asked her wherein it was that she was most dissatisfied, and promised her great comfort from your advice. She says she has a coldness when she says her prayers (which she constantly does twice a day), and wandering thoughts, and that the week before she receives the sacrament she endures such agonies as are not to be expressed. I know no one so able to assist her as you, and I am sure of your endeavour to do it, which will be fresh obligation to your faithful

Aspasia

Araspes is very good to me, and I am not ungrateful.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 50–51.²

¹Replying to JW's of July 24 (*Works*, 25:296–99).

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:299.

From Ann Granville and Mary (Westcomb) Granville¹

Gloucester
August [9, 1731]

I am ashamed to receive a second letter from Cyrus before I had acknowledged the first. Your readiness to correspond with me shows the extreme desire you have of doing good, and certainly you succeed in that inclination. I am pleased that you approve of tender sentiments. I confess were I to part with them I should lose much the greatest pleasure of life. I doubt I sometimes carry them too far. You are not yet acquainted with me, I find, or you could not say the obliging things you do. But take care how you commend me. Your praises may be dangerous, and will perhaps raise a vanity I would do everything in my power to suppress. Flattery from any person vexes me, but from Cyrus it would afflict me.

I have never read Mrs. Astell's *Proposal to the Ladies*,² but will very soon. A method in reading is what I want extremely; I am sure I should better understand what I read, and improve more by it. Perhaps in one day I read part of several books, and by that means have a confusion in my head, which makes me not able to regulate my thoughts upon any subject. Should I not finish one book before I begin another?

I have been three weeks in Herefordshire, with two sensible, agreeable young ladies. We passed our time something in the way we did at Stanton; but we had neither a Sappho nor Cyrus with us. That happiness would have made our hours quite delightful. The country, I think, is the most rational way of living. One has the leisure for improvement. There are a thousand objects that raise one's thoughts to goodness which in a town are entirely wanting.

You have no cause to complain that you have not time to bestow upon your friends, because your goodness of heart is so extensive that all your fellow creatures are dear to you. To want your assistance is with you a just pretence to have it. I am sure I can upon no other motive demand one moment of you, whose hours are always employed in things of more importance than answering such letters as mine are. I have many passions and many weaknesses to correct, which I hope by your help to do, and shall never scruple to tell you of them, will you but as freely give me your opinion how I shall conquer those enemies of my peace.

I am sure it was a great concern to Aspasia not to see you when you was in town. I can answer for her as well as for myself, that we should be much rejoiced to have an opportunity of improving our acquaintance and friendship with Cyrus and Araspes. But since we are not yet allowed that advantage, we are very glad to make use of this imperfect way of conversation. I hope another year to meet you in sweet Horrel³ with our sweeter Sappho. I had the comfort of hearing she was well last week, but can't have the joy of seeing her this summer, which is a great mortification to me. I have another care upon my spirits, my sister's voyage to Ireland. She makes it late before she goes. The Irish seas are very dangerous. We were never separated so far from each other before. What accidents may happen before we meet again? You see I am as ignorant in a method of writing as of reading. If you will instruct me in either it shall be esteemed a great obligation, and acknowledged with gratitude by

Selima

My mother joins with me in best wishes to you and Araspes.

¹Replying to JW's of July 31 (*Works*, 25:300–01).

²Mary Astell, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest* (London: R. Wilkin, 1694).

³Horrel is a hill to the south of Stanton, Gloucestershire.

[From Mary (Westcomb) Granville]⁴

My partiality to my dear N[ancy]⁵ makes me often overlook her omissions. But I have really been angry with her today, for saying so little in my behalf to good Mr. Cyrus; who I hope will judge favourably of me, and excuse my Selima, which proceeds really from infirmity. I shall always have a true sense of your worth, which will oblige me to be, as I ought,

Your sincere humble servant,

M[ary (Westcombe) Granville]

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Selima' Letter-book, 7–10.⁶

⁴Added to the previous letter after a deep space.

⁵I.e., Ann Granville.

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 25:301–02.

From Ann Granville¹

Gloucester
August 24 [1731]

How glad should I be could I communicate the pleasure I am going to enjoy to Cyrus! Tomorrow I go to our dear and valuable Sappho. I shall stay with her a week or ten days, and heartily wish some friends could meet us in our evening walks.

What can I say for your last letter? It gave me a satisfaction beyond any thanks I can return. Cyrus sees more than anyone else can perceive when he finds failings in himself. How then must others, and I particularly, appear to his clear sight? Who come so far, far short of him in wisdom and goodness! No, I don't think you capable of flattery, with a design to deceive; but as it is a word often made use of for complaisance, that way only I applied it to you.

You are willing to think me rather what I should be than what I am, but what I hope I may one day be, if I join my own industry to your friendly advice. How charming is the method you lay down for knowledge! And O, how happy would the attainment of it make me! But so ignorant am I that I hardly can tell what it is I would know. My time has hitherto been passed too much in trifles. I would willingly redeem it, if possible. Divinity is certainly the best and most useful knowledge. It will teach me to be good, to be happy. But what I have read has been in so hasty and confused a manner I can give no good account of it. My future studies shall be directed by you; but I can't understand what is not writ plain, neither can I read with pleasure what is not good language. Does not this show great defect of judgment?

We shall think of you and Milton's hymn² when we walk in dear, delightful Horrel hill. Then

The hours will fly with down upon their wings.

After what you have said with regard to my dear sister I ought not to be uneasy. Nay, I know 'I should not fear, though the earth were moved, and the waters rage and swell.'³ And yet so weak I am I cannot help it; my heart is disquieted within me. I have been writing to her this morning the last letter she will receive from me in England. I don't apprehend much danger from her voyage, but to be separated so far asunder, and so many months before there is a possibility of meeting, that it is which gives me anxious thoughts. She is a treasure of inestimable price to me. Indeed no one can know her worth that is less acquainted with her than I am. I speak not as of a sister, but a friend, and one quite near to my happiness. Heaven has been very gracious to me, has withheld from me the glittering dangerous temptations of fortune, and made me rich in worthy, generous friends. O may I never be unthankful for the blessing!

Your friendship will greatly help me to support every trial in life. But for that dreadful one you mention,⁴

Far be that fatal hour in distant time.

I hope I shall never prove the bitter moment.

I shall be very glad to receive a letter from you while I am at Stanton, and more so because it will be a pleasure to Sappho to hear of you. You may write to her, and enclose it to me. With what real joy should I do her or you the least service! It is my misfortune never to be able in any degree to return the kindness of my friends. Hearty affection, ill expressed, is all I have to give in exchange for a thousand

¹Replying to JW's of Aug. 14 (*Works*, 25:305–08).

²JW had quoted from *Paradise Lost* in his letter.

³Ps. 46:2–3 (BCP).

⁴JW had mentioned in passing the possibility that God might bid one of them to 'go hence'.

good offices I daily receive. That Cyrus must accept of for giving me the pleasure and improvement of his correspondence, which I hope in time will make me as good a Christian as I am now

His faithful friend,

Selima

Araspes has always my good wishes. My mother's attend you both.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Selima' Letter-book, 15–18.⁵

⁵Transcription published in *Works*, 25:308–09.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves¹

[London]
August 26 [1731]

I hope this letter will reach you before I begin my journey, which I intend to do on Tuesday next. I shall go in five days to Chester, and from thence take ship for Dublin. The passage is reckoned a bad one, and the time of year subject to storms. I must desire your prayers for me, particularly at that time. Though I thank God I have not one anxious thought about my journey or voyage. When I consider the worst thing that can happen will be death, I am not terrified at the reflection. I hope I am not too presumptuous. Tell me if I am, and teach me how to fear in a proper way the king of terrors.

The lady for whom you have so kindly given me your advice has been in the country almost ever since I received your letter. I shall take an opportunity of reading part of it to her, but not all, till I have heard again from you, for a reason which I will now tell you. A physician ought to know every symptom of a distemper, or how should he know properly to prescribe? You say she should add to the length of her prayers, or to the frequency of them. But she has tried that method already, and has reduced herself to death's door by her intense application to her devotions. To be sincere, I doubt one great cause of her uneasiness is a pride of heart which she is not sensible of. I have observed instances of it in trifles; as expecting great civilities and ceremony from her acquaintance, and thinking that they do not pay her respect enough, and that they neglect her. When she has had her mind ruffled by any such unkind behaviour, as she calls it, she then falls into a deep melancholy, and from apprehending the loss of her friends' affections she carries those fears farther, almost to despair. She has also a mixture of vanity (which bears a near relation to pride), to appear in as good clothes as any of her companions when she can't so well afford it. If a proper humility could be instilled into her I am apt to think it would dispel all those gloomy thoughts that now perplex her. She would be resigned to all the decrees of Providence when she was once convinced how little we, any of us, deserve the blessings we enjoy. That unfortunate disposition of hers would make me very criminal in her eyes did she know what I have told you of her. But sure the intention with which I do it justifies my discovering those infirmities of my friend that cannot be cured without being known.

When you write to me, which I hope will be soon, direct your letter to my sister at Gloucester, and she will take care to convey it to me. I shall be glad to know from you the definition of pride and vanity, and the difference there is between them. Give me leave to tell you my opinion, and then set me right, if my notion does not agree with yours. The proud man (according to my way of thinking) believes he deserves all honours that can be paid him, and the vain man would be thought to deserve all. I have not time to add a word more. I am to Cyrus and Araspes a faithful friend,

Aspasia

I must insist on your burning all my letters, and pray don't make use of any epithet before my name when you write to me. I have not time to tell my reasons.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 55–57.²

¹Replying to JW's of Aug. 12 (*Works*, 25:303–05).

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:309–10.

From Mehetabel (Wesley) Wright

[London]
September 15, 1731

My Friend and Brother,

Forasmuch as it seemeth good unto me to say something about the long male infant thou wast pleased to comfort our eyes withal, let me ask thee whether thou thinkest it lawful to send from under thy protection a plant of so fine a growth for thy fair sisters to rejoice at?¹ What aileth thee, O man, to expose to female view a sight that perhaps our latest moment can scarce eradicate? If I may follow the example of better writers, and use a contradiction in terms, so visible a nothingness no countenance ever disclosed before. But to the rueful length of legs, to say nothing of back, etc.; for, as Sosia said, the best that can be said of some things is to say nothing at all.² But if such mighty matters might be said or conceived concerning length, what shall we say (for description's sake) concerning breadth? Why, verily, nothing neither, since nothing can come of nothing. Not to insinuate neither that this goodly flower is without a stalk, for I heard a sage matron affirm he was all stalk, and you forgot not to sprinkle him daily, lest his want of growing might be laid to you. But to what height aspire I, since 'tis as impossible to reach my subject with my pen as hand! Were I to stretch out both according to my utmost ability, I might possibly not hit the seat of his wit, which supposing as much out of sight were he here as at a mile distance. I conclude with kind and tender remembrances to my brother in the flesh,

Thy affectionate friend and sister,

Mehet. Wright

I am pretty well, as also is the husband of my bosom. Adieu.

Address: 'To / the Revd Mr Jno Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Postmark: '15/SE'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] H[etty] Sept. 15. 1731 / wit'.

Source: holograph; DDWF 9/2.³

¹Mehetabel is likely speaking tongue in cheek about John Whitelamb, who was currently JW's student at Lincoln College, and may have been allowed to visit London. Martha Wesley was also present in London, living with her uncle Matthew.

²Summarizing a speech of a character in John Dryden's play *Amphitryon*, Act. III.

³Transcription published in Stevenson, *Memorials*, 311.

From Ann Granville¹

Gloucester
September 29, [1731]

Why did not Cyrus and Araspes come one week sooner to Stanton, and then I should have seen them? Sappho, dear Sappho and I, in every sweet, delightful walk, wished extremely that we might together once again enjoy the pleasures of friendly conversation in lovely Horrel hill! Why was I denied the satisfaction that would have brought with it a great advantage? 'Tis among the many things my weak reason can't assign a cause for. I believe 'tis best it should be so, but can't help being sorry. For this is the second time this summer I have missed seeing friends whose acquaintance I desire to improve.

I suppose you found at your return to Oxford my last letter. I wish you don't repent your encouraging a correspondence that is likely to give you so much trouble. One reason for my writing now is to ask your opinion in regard to a young lady for whom I have a great value, and am much concerned, because she is in a very melancholy way. Nobody's arguments are so plain and strong as yours, therefore your advice would be of service to her. She has conversed with many people without being satisfied. Her case is this. She has always been remarkable for being religious, but is never contented with herself, not thinking she does what is right, being troubled with wandering and (what she terms) wicked thoughts whenever she goes to her private devotions or to church, especially at the sacrament. This she has been afraid of, and in perfect agonies at the time of receiving, for fear she was not well prepared. She says she does not find that pleasure in acts of religion and reading good things which she believes a good Christian ought, but that she does her duty with heaviness, nay sometimes reluctance; therefore she fears 'tis not acceptable. She thought fasting so necessary that she has destroyed her health by it. She has even believed going to sleep was a sin. What pity 'tis, a person with such good inclinations, who desires so earnestly to do what is right, should have so much unhappiness! She is very generous and charitable, has an easy fortune and many friends, who love and value her. But this unfortunate way of thinking corrodes and embitters everything. She has some time ago been very much perplexed about the sin of the Holy Ghost. Be so good as to explain what that sin is, and what method she can take to do her duty with cheerfulness. I believe your way of writing will sooner convince her where she is mistaken, and ease her doubts and scruples, than any casuist she has met with. I will not make any excuse for giving you this trouble, because I know to Cyrus a good action rewards itself. My sister (thank God) is safely arrived at Dublin, and now I find how wrong all my fears were.

I reverence and extremely respect the G[odly] and Holy Club, an account of which I had from Sappho. O may success attend every member in their just and regular designs! Sure such examples will turn men to righteousness; among others I hope to reap benefit from them.

I have been much delighted with Mrs. Astell. I wish I had read her books sooner, and I would have endeavoured last winter to have been acquainted with her.² For alas! among the many I am obliged to converse with how very few give anyone either pleasure or improvement! From you and Araspes I find both, and should be glad could I return either, but 'tis not in my power. I carried the book you favoured us with in town to Stanton. But how was my Sally and I vexed, not to be able to read what we knew was so well worth our study! I won't be so unconscionable as to add any more to this long letter, but that I am to Cyrus and Araspes a most faithful friend,

Selima

My mother's best wishes attend the good brothers. I blush to see how many blots and blunders I have made. After having writ so much it appears ridiculous to say I am in haste, and yet I protest 'tis true.

¹Written before she had received JW's of Sept. 27 (*Works* 25:310–13).

²Mary Astell, whose brief obituary had appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* under date May 24, 1731, as 'author of several ingenious pieces, at Chelsea'.

Source: JW manuscript copy; 'Selima' Letter-book, 23–25.³

³Transcription published in *Works*, 25:316–17.

From Emilia Wesley

Lincoln
November 28, 1731

Dearest Brother,

Your last letter comforted and settled my mind wonderfully.¹ O continue to talk to me of the reasonableness of resignation to the divine will, to enable me to bear cheerfully the ills of life, the lot appointed me, and never to suffer grief so far to prevail as to injure my health, or long to cloud the natural cheerfulness of my temper.

I had writ[ten] long since but had a mind to see first how my small affairs would be settled, and now can assure you that at Lady-day² I leave Lincoln certainly. You was of opinion, you may remember, that my leaving Mrs. Taylor would not only prove prejudicial to her affairs (and so far all the town agrees with you) but would be a great affliction to her. I own I thought so too, but we both were a little mistaken. She received the news of my going with an indifference I did not expect. Never was such a teacher, as I may justly say I have been, so foolishly lost, so unnecessarily disoblged. Had she paid my last year's wages but the day before Martinmas,³ I still had stayed. Instead of that, she has received one hundred and twenty pounds within these three months, and yet never would spare one six or seven pounds for me, which I am sure no teacher will ever bear. The jest is she fancies I never knew of any money she received; when, alas, she can never have one five pounds but I know of it. I have so satisfied brother Sam that he wishes me good success at Gainsborough, and says he can no longer oppose my resolution, which pleases me much, for I would gladly live civilly with him and friendly with you.

I have a fairer prospect at Gainsborough even than I could hope for. My greatest difficulty will be want of money at my first entrance. I shall furnish my school with canvas, worsteds, silks, etc., etc., and am much afraid of being dipped in debt at first. But God's will be done! Troubles of that kind are what I have been used to. Will you lend me the other £3 which you designed for me at Lady-day? It would help me much. You will if you can, I am sure, for so would I do by you. I am half starved with cold, which hinders me from writing longer. Emery is no better. Mrs. Taylor and Kitty [Hargreave] give their service. Pray send soon to me. Kez[ia] is gone home for good and all. I am knitting brother Charles a fine purse. Pray my love to him.

I am, dear brother,

Your loving sister and constant friend,

Emilia Wesley

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/176.⁴

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Mar. 25, the Feast of the Annunciation.

³Nov. 11.

⁴Transcription published in Clarke, *Memoirs* (1823), 467–68; and Stevenson, *Memorials*, 268 (misdated Feb. 1731).

From Ann Granville¹

Gloucester
December 1 [1731]

It is very unwillingly that I have been so long prevented thanking Cyrus for the last proof of his friendship, though you have reason to be glad of it, for my letters are so trifling that you show the most good nature and humility in the world to suffer my correspondence. I hope in time to be more worthy of it. Nothing will be more conducive to it than the advantage of such an instructor.

I can't help believing my friend is the better for your good and kind advice. She has not mentioned anything upon that subject in her last letters, but says her spirits are more lively, and she enters a little into the diversions of the Bath, which at first she was quite averse to, for I fancy the more satisfied one is with oneself the more cheerfully may one partake of the innocent entertainments of the world. How far, indeed, and what sort of diversions are the most allowable and consistent with one's duty, is what I would fain be satisfied in. Suppose I go every week to an assembly, play at cards two or three hours; if I omit no duty by it, is it a fault? Or would it be in an older person than myself? Though I don't think being young exempts me from any good or religious act.

You see, Cyrus, how freely I expose to you all my errors, all my scruples; and though I expose the weakness of judgment, yet I show how desirous I am to 'reform my will and rectify my thought'.² For sure the active principle within is worth improvement. You have confirmed me in the inclination of doing it, have already, and I hope will continue to assist me in it. I shall be extremely thankful for that scheme of books you mention. O that I could make as good a use of them as the person it was made for! What happiness is it to have those we love follow after virtue! And how sensible in affliction to see 'em forsake those paths which can alone make them happy! That is a pain Cyrus has not, and I hope will never know, any other ways than the general benevolence he has for all his fellow creatures makes him grieve when they do amiss.

Now give me leave to say that I can't find out the advantage of losing the conversation of particular sensible and virtuous friends. Their words, their example, excite us on to goodness. They blow up and keep alive those sparks of religion which are too apt (with sorrow I speak it) to grow faint and languid. I can recollect many instances where they have been of advantage to me. At church their attention has³ increased mine. At home they have begun good conversations that I have been the better for. As we were often together we used to assist each other in bearing a multitude of impertinence that I am now forced to suffer singly. Now have I not more reason to imagine 'twas rather for their good than mine that they were removed? Now I fear I show great arrogance to deny anything you say, but I only make this objection in order to be more fully convinced. No one can do it so soon as Cyrus. His arguments are so plain and sensible, and withal so well expressed, they please the fancy while they inform the understanding, which is what I very seldom have met with before, most instructive things being dry and tedious, at least to me, who cannot, like my dear Sappho, search for through all her 'obscure recesses'.

I am now reading a book I want your opinion of. 'Tis Mr. Burkitt's Explanation of the New Testament. He calls it *Expository Notes with Practical Observations*.⁴ Sure Cyrus cannot sit without a fire this weather. I hope the good society prospers; one way I'm sure they do. I often think of them,

¹Apparently a reply to JW's letters of Nov. 1, 6, to whose contents it affords some clues along with a probable quotation.

²Cf. Introduction to John Davies, *The Original, Nature, and Immortality of the Soul* (1697).

³Orig., 'have'.

⁴William Burkitt, *Expository Notes with Practical Observations on the New Testament* (London: Parkhurst, Robinson, & Wyat, 1700).

especially when the cold makes me shrink. They are those that are 'chosen of peculiar grace'.⁵ The influence of it will I hope extend to their weaker brethren.

The last letter I had from Aspasia she said she was very much concerned she had not writ to you, and desired me to assure the good brothers of her friendship, and good wishes; as does my mother, who is very much out of order with a cold. The last time I heard from Sappho she was well. Is not Araspes' hymn quite charming? You have not sent your poetic herd so far, but you can call 'em in whenever you please.

Cyrus may be certain I shall never forget him in the only way I can show my gratitude. O that I had reason to think my prayers would be as efficacious as his with[out] doubt are! What is uttered with so much real piety must be successful for himself and for his friends. There I hope he will always place

Selima

Endorsement: by JW, 'M[iss] Granville / Dec. 17. [1]731' and in another place, '1. Dec'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/67.⁶

⁵Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iii.183.

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 25:323–24.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

[Westminster, or possibly Epworth]
December 11, 1731

Dear Jack,

Though I have not had time to tell you so much, your last grieved me and astonished me.¹

That I should be a hindrance to your salvation, a stumbling-block in your way to heaven, was a concern to me; and it had been much more so had I not opposed only such things as you yourself had made necessary. It is in your power to make everything indifferent a duty or a sin, though not to make any duty or sin indifferent. If you are so minded, I say no more, for your retreat is inaccessible to all but God: the spirit of a man that is in him.²

But another part amazes me to the last degree. 'I that am passed from death' — 'I that am free from assaults' — To the best of my remembrance I never had the least direct or indirect thought of myself in my last letter. Who am I to be set for a pattern, and much more to set up myself for such! I was out of the question entirely; and you, too, more than you may imagine. For had it not been for fear of your singularity being a disadvantage to other people, I should scarce have wrote twice. As to yourself, I did and do think sincerity sufficient. My own behaviour, I own, might prejudice me against yours, as to my particular liking. But surely not so far as to make me think you disserving the cause of religion. I fear that opinion is built on a firmer ground than my temper, which by the by is full as grave, not to say melancholy, as yours. I wish I had no more cause to be melancholy.

I agree John Whitelamb shall have the money, on this condition, that he owns he has received that 20 shillings in part of alleviation of my father's hard bargain with him. For I think 'tis but just when he remembers the one he should not forget the other—'tis on my father's account I consent.

I can't write to Charles tonight. We shall be glad to see you in the holidays.³ But we shall be out of town a week, but surely back again by New Year's Day. We join in love to you both. I am, dear Jack,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

S. Wesley

Service to your head.⁴

N.B. *Ora pro me, fratrem ne desere frater.*⁵

Address: 'To the Reverend Mr / Wesley Fellow of / Lincoln / Oxford'.

Postmarks: '14/DE', 'EP' (?).

Source: MARC, DDWF 5/9.⁶

¹This is apparently a response to JW's letter of Nov. 17 (*Works*, 25:320–23); but possibly also to a follow up letter in early December that has not survived.

²Cf. 1 Cor. 2:11.

³SW Jr. spells 'holydays'.

⁴Euseby Isham, the Rector of Lincoln College.

⁵'Pray for me, that brother should not desert brother.' Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, x.600.

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 25:324–25.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

[Westminster]
[c. January 1, 1732¹]

Dear Brother,

Your last letter affected me much. I find by the very way of pronouncing, that you are not *yet* in a consumption, though there is apprehension and danger of your being so. Your life is of benefit and consequence to the world, and I would therefore willingly, for the sake of others, draw your days out to their utmost date. For yourself, indeed, the matter is not much, if you go well whensoever called; as I don't question but you will. As to any faults I have to tell you of, I think you know already all I say and all I think too, upon that subject. The main is what I have often repeated—your soul is too great for your body. Your watching and intention of thought for a long time; your speaking often, and long, when wearied; in short your spirit (though in a better sense than Dryden meant it) 'over-informs its tenement of clay'.²

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1(1778): 129–30.³

¹Date conjectured from apparent situation, after JW's intervening letter of Dec. 17 (which has not survived) answering SW Jr.'s of Dec. 11.

²John Dryden, 'Absalom and Achitophel,' l. 158.

³Reprinted in *Works*, 25:325–26.

From Kezia and Mary Wesley

Epworth
January 20, 1731/2

Dear Brother,

Had anybody told me you would have been almost four months without writing,¹ and confirmed it with an oath, I should not have believed it. Nor if I had not loved you with more than a sister's love, tis likely I should never have written more. Perhaps you may say you should not have cared if I never had. To this I answer,

Scorn no one's love, though of a mean degree.
Love is a present for a mighty king.²

It was not sympathy, the dearest bond of love, or consciousness of my own merit, that made me think I was worthy of love and therefore it was but common justice I should be beloved; but gratitude, because you made so many professions of friendship to me at Lincoln, and showed your love both in words and actions that engaged my affections. Nor shall I ever forget your kindness to me there if you think fit never to remember me, or to show more than common civility to me any more. I think you have been so good as to tell me if you did but so much as suspect I wanted anything, you would do it. Surely I have told you how glad I am to hear from you, and cannot admit of any excuse but sickness, nor can I imagine how you could reasonably expect my writing first, when you know the shyness of my temper, and how fearful I am of giving offence to any, especially one that I thought was my friend. Yet, lest there should seem to be want of affection on my side, I will endeavour to say something in vindication of myself.

I came to Epworth the 20th of November. On the Tuesday after, sister Ellison sent for my mother. She was as near death as anybody could be to live—in childbed.³ It snowed⁴ all day, and my mother got such a violent cold that it turned to a pleurisy. She was sat up with a fortnight, and everybody thought she would die. She has kept her room ever since, and I fear won't be well this winter. We sent for sister Emily, she does not go to Lincoln any more.

You may suppose I can't have much time to spare, not to say anything of my own ill-health, but a slight indisposition should not prevent my writing to you. Tis true I had great inconveniences to struggle with abroad,⁵ but there were no sisters or mothers to grieve for.

Sister Ellison is coming to live at Epworth again at Lady Day,⁶ which I am very sorry for. They will be a constant uneasiness to us. Dick is for having [the] Wroot tithe. I believe if my mother can possibly prevail upon my father to let him have it, she will. I don't see any reason for my father giving anything away, except he were in better circumstances; and it is in effect giving, for if he would pay his rent he might as well have a farm of any one else.

In the next place I shall give you an account of the people at Lincoln, and the manner of our parting. As there were very few persons who gave me pleasure, so consequently I could not have much pain at parting. Mrs. Taylor was very civil when I came away, as indeed she was all the time I was with

¹JW's diary records writing Kezia on July 1, 1731, then not again until Dec. 7.

²Herbert, 'The Church Porch', st. 59.

³Martha Ellison was born to Richard and Susanna (Wesley) Ellison in late November 1731 and baptized December 17 at Belton (near Epworth). She died in infancy, buried at Epworth on June 7, 1733.

⁴Orig., 'snew'.

⁵Her time in Lincoln, teaching at Mrs. Taylor's boarding school.

⁶Mar. 25, the Feast of the Annunciation.

her. Poor woman, she is gone wrong; I am very sor[ry] for her.

She that once hath missed the right way,
The further she doth go, the farther she doth stray.⁷

The reason of my coming home was want of money. Brother [Samuel] Wesley sent me £5 to keep me at Lincoln, but sister Emily kept it in part of payment for what was owing to her on my account. Nor do I blame her, because she will have occasion for what little she has when she goes to Gainsborough. Miss Kitty [Hargreave] was very well in health when I left her, and she went to chapel every morning, and was some time alone every night, and I believe she is very religious, yet I am far from thinking she will make a good wife. Miss Peggy was with us a little after you left Lincoln, and gave her service to brother Charles, and said she was very sorry she came after you were gone. I believe she also has a good sense of religion, and a good natural temper, but I had not much time with her. She stayed only a fortnight and then went to her uncle's again.

Dear brother, for your sake I intend to be careful of loving again, for whoever we take pleasure in are certainly capable of giving us pain. Nor should I ever have thought of choosing you as a friend when there was so great inequality between us, if you had not told me that

Love, like death, makes all distinctions void.⁸

I hope you will pardon my writing after such a free manner, but I rely on your goodness and our former friendship to excuse it. If I should be so happy as to hear from you any more, pray let me know when you come down, and whether Mr. [William] Morgan will come with you, and how long you think of staying. I fear the pain of parting, if your stay be short, will infinitely outweigh the pleasure of seeing you with me; that is, if you are like what you were when I saw you last.

Your sincere friend till death,

Kezia Wesley

[unsigned addition to letter; in Mary Wesley's hand]

I beg the pardon for putting you to this charge. I designed to have writ[ten] to you with the enclosed, but could not possibly get it finished before John Brown went to Gainsborough. So [I] begged my sister to let me enclose mine in hers, to save poor Johnny [Whitelamb] charge. I hope this severe weather has not quite starved him. Mr. Morgan must boil half an ounce of sen[n]a in every gallon of wood drink.

Address: 'For / the Revd Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon / per London'.

Postmark: '28/IA'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] K[ezia] Jan. 20 / 1731 / Love'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 13/2.⁹

⁷Cf. Spenser, *Fairie Queene*, Book I, Canto 9, 390–91.

⁸Prior, *Solomon*, ii.242.

⁹Abridged transcription published in Stevenson, *Memorials*, 419–20.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley¹

[Epworth]

Monday, February 21, 1731/2

Dear Jacky,

I thank God I am much better than I have been, though far from being in health; yet a little respite from much pain I esteem a great mercy. If you had any design to visit our family this spring (which for your own sake I could wish you had not) my health or sickness will be of little consequence; your entertainment would be the same, and I am no company.

I have time enough now, more than I can make a good use of, but yet for many reasons I care not to write to anyone. I never did much good in my life when in the best health and vigour, and therefore I think it would be presumption in me to hope to be useful now. 'Tis more than I can well do to bear my own infirmity and other sufferings as I ought and would do. All inordinate affection to present things may, by the grace of God, and a close application of our own spirits to the work, be so far conquered as to give us very little or no trouble. But when affliction comes once to touch our purely natural appetites, which we can never put off but with the body itself; when every member of the body is the seat of pain and our strong and, I think, innocent propension to ease rest is crossed in every article; then comes on the severity of our trial. Then it is not an ordinary measure of divine succour and support that will enable us to continue steadfast in the spirit and disposition of Jesus Christ. This was the very case of our dear Lord! He had no irregular passions or sinful appetites ever to combat with. But he had what was infinitely harder to be sustained, the greatest contradiction of sinners against the purity of his nature to undergo, and all his innocent natural appetites voluntarily to sacrifice in a death exquisitely painful! And attended with circumstance very grievous to be borne by human nature, though in its utmost perfection!

I am heartily sorry for Mr. [William] Morgan. 'Tis no wonder that his illness should at last affect his mind; 'tis rather to be admired that it has not done it long ago. It's a common case, and what all who are afflicted with any indisposition a great while together experience as well as he. Such is our make, such the condition of embodied spirits, that they cannot act with freedom or exert their native powers when the bodily organs are out of tune. This shows how necessary it is for people (especially the young) to improve the present blessing of health and strength by laying a strong foundation of piety towards God, of submission, patience, and all other Christian virtues before the decline of life, before the shadows of the even[ing] lengthen² upon them and those years draw nigh in which without solid piety they can find no pleasure.

The young gentleman you mention seems to me to be in the right concerning the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. I own I never understood by the real presence more than what he has elegantly expressed, 'that the divine nature of Christ is then eminently present to impart (by the operation of his Holy Spirit) the benefits of his death to worthy receivers'.³ And surely the divine presence of our Lord, thus applying the virtue and merits of the great atonement to each true believer, makes the consecrated bread more than a bare sign of Christ's body, since by his so doing we receive, not only the sign, but with it the thing signified, all the benefits of his incarnation and passion! But still, however this divine institution may seem to others, to me 'tis full of mystery. Who can account for the operations of God's Holy Spirit? Or define the manner of his working upon the spirit in man, either when he enlightens the understanding, or excites and confirms the will, and regulates and calms the passions, without impairing man's liberty? Indeed the whole scheme of our redemption by Jesus Christ is beyond all things mysterious. That God! The Mighty God! The God of the spirits of all flesh! The possessor of heaven and

¹Replying to JW's letter of Jan. 26; which has not survived, but some quotes are given in this reply.

²Orig., 'lengthens'.

³In JW's reply of Feb. 28 it appears this 'young gentleman' was again William Morgan.

earth! Who is being itself! And comprehends in his most pure nature absolute perfection and blessedness! That must necessarily be infinitely happy in and of himself! That such a being should in the least degree regard the salvation of sinners! That he himself, the offended, the injured, should propose terms of reconciliation, and admit them into covenant upon any conditions, is truly wonderful and astonishing! As God did not make the world because he needed it, so neither could that be any reason for his redeeming it. He loved us, because he loved us! And would have mercy, because he would have mercy! Then the manner of man's redemption, the way by which he condescends to save us, is altogether incomprehensible! Who can unfold the mystery of the hypostatic union! Or forbear acknowledging with the apostle, that 'without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh'⁴ That the divine person of the Son of God should (if it may be permitted so to speak) seem so far to forget his dignity and essential glory as to submit to a life of poverty, contempt, and innumerable other sufferings, for above thirty years, and conclude that life in inexpressible torments! And all this to heal and save a creature that was at enmity against God, and desired not to be otherwise. Here is public and benevolent affection in its utmost exaltation and perfection! And this is 'the love of Christ', which, as the apostle justly observes, 'passeth knowledge'⁵

I have been led away so far by this vast subject that I have hardly left myself time or room to add more. The writing anything about my way of education I am much averse from.⁶ It can't (I think) be of service to anyone to know how I, that have lived such a retired life for so many years (ever since I was with child of you), used to employ my time and care in bringing up my children. No one can, without renouncing the world in the most literal sense, observe my method, and there's few (if any) that would entirely devote above twenty years of the prime of life in hope to save the souls of their children (which they think may be saved without so much ado); for that was my principal intention, however unskilfully or unsuccessfully managed.

Dear Jacky, my love and blessing is ever with you.
Adieu.

[There is inserted here a letter to Charles Wesley]

Em[ily], Molly, [and] Kez[ia] send their love to ye both.

Address: 'To The Revd Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln / Oxon'.

Postmark: '25/ FE'. *Charges:* ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Feb', with a partly erased draft on the cover of the closing paragraph of JW's reply of Feb. 28, 1732.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 2/9.⁷

⁴Cf. 1 Tim. 3:16.

⁵Eph. 3:19.

⁶Apparently this was a request made in JW's letter of Jan. 26. Her eventual answer was the lengthy letter of July 24, 1732.

⁷Transcription published in *Works*, 25:326–27; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 148–50.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley¹

[Epworth]
July 24, 1732

Dear Son,

According to your desire, I have collected the principal rules I observed in educating my family; which I now send you as they occurred to my mind, and you may (if you think they can be of use to any) dispose of them in what order you please.

The children were always put into a regular method of living, in such things as they were capable of, from their birth: as in dressing, undressing, changing their linen, etc. The first quarter commonly passes in sleep. After that they were, if possible, laid into their cradles awake and rocked to sleep; and so they were kept rocking till it was time for them to awake. This was done to bring them to a regular course of sleeping; which at first was three hours in the morning and three in the afternoon; afterwards two hours, till they needed none at all.

When turned a year old (and some before), they were taught to fear the rod, and to cry softly; by which means they escaped abundance of correction they might otherwise have had. And that most odious noise of the crying of children was rarely heard in the house, but the family usually lived in much quietness as if there had not been a child among them.

As soon as they were grown pretty strong, they were confined to three meals a day. At dinner their little table and chairs were set by ours, where they could be overlooked, and they were suffered to eat and drink (small beer) as much as they would; but not to call for anything. If they wanted aught they used to whisper to the maid which attended them, who came and spake to me. And as soon as they could handle a knife and fork, they were set to our table. They were never suffered to choose their meat, but always made eat such things as were provided for the family.

Mornings they had always spoon-meat;² sometimes on nights. But whatever they had, they were never permitted to eat at those meals of more than one thing, and of that sparingly enough. Drinking or eating between meals was never allowed, unless in case of sickness; which seldom happened. Nor were they suffered to go into the kitchen to ask anything of the servants when they were at meat; if it was known they did, they were certainly beat, and the servants severely reprimanded.

At six, as soon as family prayers were over, they had their supper. At seven the maid washed them; and, beginning at the youngest, she undressed and got them all to bed by eight. At which time she left them in their several rooms awake, for there was no such thing allowed of in our house as sitting by a child till it fell asleep.

They were so constantly used to eat and drink what was given them that when any of them was ill there was no difficulty in making them take the most unpleasant medicine; for they durst not refuse it, though some of them would presently throw it up. This I mention to show that a person may be taught to take anything, though it be never so much against his stomach.

In order to form the minds of children, the first thing to be done is to conquer their will, and bring them to an obedient temper. To inform the understanding is a work of time, and must with children proceed by slow degrees as they are able to bear it; but the subjecting the will is a thing that must be done at once—and the sooner the better. For by neglecting timely correction, they will contract a stubbornness and obstinacy which is hardly ever after conquered; and never, without using such severity as would be as painful to me as to the child. In the esteem of the world they pass for kind and indulgent whom I call cruel parents, who permit their children to get habits which they know must be afterwards broken. Nay, some are so stupidly fond as in sport to teach their children to do things which in a while after they have severely beaten them for doing.

¹In response to JW's request of Jan. 26, probably renewed in his missing letter of June 22.

²Soft or liquid food.

Whenever a child is corrected, it must be conquered; and this will be no hard matter to do if it be not grown headstrong by too much indulgence. And when the will of a child is totally subdued, and it is brought to revere and stand in awe of the parents, then a great many childish follies and inadvertences may be passed by. Some should be overlooked and taken no notice of, and others mildly reprov'd; but no wilful transgression ought ever to be forgiven children without chastisement, less or more, as the nature and circumstances of the offence require.

I insist upon conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents, till its own understanding comes to maturity, and the principles of religion have taken root in the mind.

I cannot yet dismiss this subject. As self-will is the root of all sin and misery, so whatever cherishes this in children ensures their after-wretchedness and irreligion; whatever checks and mortifies it promotes their future happiness and piety. This is still more evident if we farther consider that religion is nothing else than the doing the will of God, and not our own; that the one grand impediment to our temporal and eternal happiness being this self-will, no indulgences of it can be trivial, no denial unprofitable. Heaven or hell depends on this alone. So that the parent who studies to subdue it in his child works together with God in the renewing and saving a soul. The parent who indulges it does the devil's work, makes religion impracticable, salvation unattainable; and does all that in him lies to damn his child, soul and body, for ever.

This therefore I cannot but earnestly repeat: Break their wills betimes. Begin this great work before they can run alone, before they can speak plain, or perhaps speak at all. Whatever pains it cost, conquer their stubbornness. Break the will, if you would not damn the child. I conjure you not to neglect, not to delay this! Therefore, 1) let a child from a year old, be taught to fear the rod and cry softly. In order to this, 2) let him have nothing he cries for, absolutely nothing, great or small; else you undo your own work. 3) At all events, from that age, make him do as he is bid. If you whip him ten times running to effect it, let none persuade you it is cruelty to do this. It is cruelty not to do it. Break his will now, and his soul will live, and he will probably bless you to all eternity.³

The children of this family were taught, as soon as they could speak, the Lord's Prayer, which they were made to say at rising and bedtime constantly; to which, as they grew bigger, were added a short prayer for their parents, and some collects; a short catechism, and some portions of Scripture, as their memories could bear.

They were very early made to distinguish the Sabbath from other days, before they could well speak, or go. They were as soon taught to be still at family prayers, and to ask a blessing immediately after, which they used to do by signs, before they could kneel or speak.

They were quickly made to understand they might have nothing they cried for, and instructed to speak handsomely for what they wanted. They were not suffered to ask even the lowest servant for aught without saying, 'Pray give me such a thing'; and the servant was chid[ed] if she ever let them omit that word. Taking God's name in vain, cursing and swearing, profaneness, obscenity, rude, ill-bred names were never heard among them. Nor were they ever permitted to call each other by their proper names without the addition of 'brother' or 'sister'.

None of them were taught to read till five years old, except Kezzy, in whose case I was overruled; and she was more years learning than any of the rest had been months. The way of teaching was this. The day before a child began to learn, the house was set in order, everyone's work appointed them, and a charge given that none should come into the room from nine till twelve, or from two till five; which, you know, were our school hours. One day was allowed the child wherein to learn its letters, and each of them did in that time know all its letters, great and small, except Molly and Nancy, who were a day and a half before they knew them perfectly; for which I then thought them very dull. But since I have observed how

³This paragraph is found only in the version in the *Arminian Magazine*.

long many children are learning the hornbook,⁴ I have changed my opinion.

But the reason why I thought them so then was because the rest learned so readily; and your brother Samuel, who was the first child I ever taught, learned the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old on the 10th of February; the next day he began to learn and, as soon as he knew the letters began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse, then to read it over and over, till he could read it off-hand without any hesitation; so on to the second, etc., till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year, and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter very well. For he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice. What was yet stranger, any word he had learned in his lesson he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book; by which means he learned very soon to read any English author well.

The same method was observed with them all. As soon as they knew the letters, they were put first to spell; and read one line, then a verse, never leaving till perfect in their lesson, were it shorter or longer. So one or other continued reading at school-time without any intermission, and before we left school each child read what he had learned that morning; and ere we parted in the afternoon, what they had learned that day.

There was no such thing as loud talking or playing allowed of; but everyone was kept close to their business for the six hours of school. And it is almost incredible what a child may be taught in a quarter of a year by a vigorous application, if it have but a tolerable capacity and good health. Everyone of these, Kezzy excepted, could read better in that time than the most of women can do as long as they live. Rising out of their places, or going out of the room, was not permitted unless for good cause, and running into the yard, garden, or street, without leave, was always esteemed a capital offence.

For some years we went on very well. Never were children in better order. Never were children better disposed to piety, or in more subjection to their parents, till that fatal dispersion of them after the fire into several families.⁵ In these they were left at full liberty to converse with servants, which before they had always been restrained from; and to run abroad and play with any children, good or bad. They soon learned to neglect a strict observation of the Sabbath, and got knowledge of several songs and bad things, which before they had no notion of. That civil behaviour which made them admired when at home by all which saw them was in great measure lost, and a clownish accent and many rude ways were learned, which were not reformed without some difficulty.

When the house was rebuilt, and the children all brought home, we entered upon a strict reform; and then was begun the custom of singing psalms at beginning and leaving school, morning and evening. Then also that of a general retirement at five o'clock was entered upon, when the oldest took the youngest that could speak, and the second the next, to whom they read the Psalms for the day and a chapter in the New Testament; as in the morning they were directed to read the Psalms and a chapter in the Old, after which they went to their private prayers, before they got their breakfast or came into the family. And I thank God this custom is still preserved among us.

There were several by-laws observed among us which slipped my memory, or else they had been inserted in their proper place; but I mention them here, because I think them useful.

1. It had been observed that cowardice and fear of punishment often led children into lying, till they get a custom of it which they cannot leave. To prevent this a law was made, that whoever was charged with a fault, of which they were guilty, if they would ingenuously confess it, and promise to amend, should not be beaten. This rule prevented a great deal of lying and would have done more if one⁶ in the family would have observed it. But he could not be prevailed on, and therefore was often imposed on by false colours and equivocations, which none would have used (except one), had they been kindly

⁴A primer used for teaching the alphabet.

⁵In Feb. 1709.

⁶Probably a reference to her husband, Samuel Sr.

dealt with. And some, in spite of all, would always speak truth plainly.

2. That no sinful action, as lying, pilfering, playing at church, or on the Lord's day, disobedience, quarrelling, etc., should ever pass unpunished.

3. That no child should ever be chid[ed] or beat twice for the same fault; and that, if they amended, they should never be upbraided with it afterwards.

4. That every signal act of obedience, especially when it crossed upon their own inclinations, should be always commended and frequently rewarded, according to the merits of the case.

5. That if ever any child performed an act of obedience, or did anything with an intention to please, though the performance was not well, yet the obedience and intention should be kindly accepted; and the child with sweetness directed how to do better for the future.

6. That propriety⁷ be inviolably preserved, and none suffered to invade the property of another in the smallest matter, though it were but of the value of a farthing, or a pin; which they might not take from the owner without, much less against his consent. This rule can never be too much inculcated on the minds of children, and from the want of parents or governors doing it as they ought proceeds that shameful neglect of justice which we may observe in the world.

7. That promises be strictly observed; and a gift once bestowed, and so the right passed away from the donor, be not resumed, but left to the disposal of him to whom it was given; unless it were conditional, and the condition of the obligation not performed.

8. That no girl be taught to work till she can read very well; and then that she be kept to her work with the same application, and for the same time, that she was held to in reading. This rule also is much to be observed; for the putting children to learn sewing before they can read perfectly is the very reason why so few women can read fit to be heard, and never to be well understood.

Source: published transcription; JW, *Journal*, Aug. 1, 1742 (*Works*, 19:286–91); and an abridged version (though including one paragraph not in the *Journal*) in JW's sermon, 'On Obedience to Parents', *Arminian Magazine* 7 (1784): 462–64.⁸

⁷The right of possession or use.

⁸A collated transcription published in *Works*, 25:330–31; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 369–73. Wallace includes comparative notes demonstrating Susanna's awareness of John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*.

From John Clayton¹

Oxon
August 1, 1732

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Excuse me from interrupting you from attending to the noble work you have taken in hand, whilst I give you an account of the present state of our affairs in Oxford.

I cannot but think it an extraordinary piece of providence that when we had lost our best advocate and patron all opposition against us should immediately cease. For know that since you left us nobody has thought it worth while to attack either Mr. Smith² or me, or endeavour to remove us from those principles wherein you by the grace of God have fixed us. I have gone every day to Lincoln, big with expectation to hear of some mighty attack made upon Mr. Smith, but I thank God I have always been disappointed, for not one of the Fellows has once so much as tried to shake him, or to convert him from the right way wherein I hope he at present walks. Indeed on Sunday he met with a rub from Mr. Vesey,³ who refused to read prayers for him in your chapel, for fear of contributing anything to his going to Christ Church. But Mr. Smith had the heart to desire that favour of the Rector which Mr. Vesey had denied him, who immediately promised to read for him, and encouraged him to proceed in the way he was in, and if possible to make further progress in virtue and holiness. He goes out of town tomorrow morning, and so will be entirely out of danger from the Fellows of Lincoln.

We had conversation this morning, whilst we were at breakfast together, concerning the temptations which may possibly arise from strange company and travelling, and Mr. Smith seems to be forearmed against, and determined to oppose them to the utmost of his powers. He joins with me in best respects to your brother and you, and desires you won't forget to send the bands and the poems you promised him.

Poor Mr. Clements is still wavering.⁴ He was with me last night two hours, but I doubt to no purpose.

My little flock at Brasenose are, God be praised, true to their principles, and I hope to themselves too.

¹John Clayton (1709–73), son of a Manchester bookseller, matriculated at Brasenose, Oxford in 1725, receiving his BA in 1729, and MA in 1732. It was also 1732 when Clayton met JW and became part of the Oxford Methodists. At his suggestion they began observing stationary fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays. Returning to Manchester in 1733, Clayton was appointed perpetual curate of Sacred Trinity, Salford. In 1740 he became chaplain at the Collegiate Church. He was a close friend of the non-jurors John Byrom and Thomas Deacon and had a number of pupils from Jacobite families in his academy in Salford. His Jacobite sympathies led to his temporary suspension by the bishop of Chester in 1745. JW visited Clayton both before and after going to Georgia, but Clayton distanced himself from the Wesley brothers after their evangelical conversion. JW heard him read prayers in 1752, and CW heard him preach in 1756, but without any renewal of their friendship. Clayton died at Salford on Sept. 25, 1773.

²William Smith (1706–65), of Leicester, who received his BA in 1729 and MA in 1732, both at Lincoln College. He was elected a fellow of Lincoln in 1731, replacing Euseby Isham, who had just become Rector. At first very sympathetic to Wesley, Smith joined in attending weekly communion at Christ Church cathedral, and remained in occasional touch with him after they had both left Oxford. See Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 26–27 n.

³William Vesey (1677–1755), a Fellow of Lincoln College from 1703 to his death, and one of JW's close friends at Lincoln.

⁴Likely William Clements (b. c. 1712), who entered Lincoln College in 1726, received his BA at Wadham in 1730, and his MA from Magdalen in 1733.

Bocardo,⁵ I fear, grows worse upon my hands. They have done nothing but quarrel ever since you left us. And they carried matters so high on Saturday that the bailiffs were sent for, who ordered Tomlyns to be fettered and put in the dungeon, where he lay some hours, and then upon promise of his good behaviour was released again. He has been much better ever since that time, and I hope will be the better for it all his lifetime. Wisdom has never been to hear me read, notwithstanding his promise. I sent for him yesterday, but he would not come down, and when I had done reading I went upstairs to him and upbraided him with breaking his promise, upon which he very surlily replied that he had thought better of it since he had seen me, and was determined never to come near Blair,⁶ lest his indignation should rise at the sight of him.

The Castle⁷ is, I thank God, in much better condition. All the felons were acquitted except Salmon, who is referred to be tried at Warwick, to our great disappointment, and the sheep-stealer, who is burnt in the hand, and who I do verily believe is a great penitent. I got Mrs. [Mary] Topping a copy of her son's indictment at the Assizes, which has made her mighty easy ever since; and she is now endeavouring to bring her mind into a due frame for the devout participation of the Holy Communion on Sunday next.⁸ Tempro is discharged, and I have appointed Harris to read to the prisoners in his stead. Two of the felons likewise have paid their fees and are gone out, both of them able to read mighty well. There are only two in the gaol who want this accomplishment, John Clanville, who reads but moderately, and the horse-dealer, who cannot read at all. He knows all his letters, and can spell most of the common monosyllables. I hear them both read three times a week, and I believe Salmon hears them so many times a day.

One of my college scholars has left me, but the others go on mighty well. The woman, who was a perfect novice, spells tolerably, and so does one of the boys, and the other makes shift to read with spelling every word that is longer than ordinary. The boys can both say their Catechism so far as to the end of the Commandments, and can likewise repeat the morning and evening prayers for children in Ken's *Manual*.⁹ Mrs. Trueby has been very ill this last week, so that she has made no great proficiency.

I am to go down at six o'clock to hear the determination of a meeting of St. Thomas's parish concerning separating Bossum and his wife. When I had promised to give a crown towards clothing the woman, and the overseer had determined to take her in upon that condition, the churchwarden would needs have him try to put the man upon me too, to get a crown towards clothing him. But as he is able to work for his living I don't think him a proper object of charity. Nor can I at this time afford to do anything for him, because I am apprehensive that I must be forced to contribute to Salmon's relief, who will want near twenty shillings to subpoena proper witnesses to Warwick at his trial; and I cannot but think it a much greater act of charity to rescue a suffering innocent than to relieve an idle beggar.

I have been twice at the school, viz. on Tuesday and Saturday last, and intend to go again as soon as I have finished this letter. The children go on pretty well except Jervaise's boy, who I find truants till eleven o'clock in a morning. I threatened the boy what we would do to him if ever he truanted any more, and he has promised (as all children do) that he will do so no more; nay, his mother assures me that she will take care for the future that he shall not. I got a shilling for her from our Vice-Principal, and gave her sixpence myself, to preserve the gown that is in pawn from being sold; and the woman who has it has promised not to sell it provided Jervaise will bring her sixpence a week towards redeeming it.

⁵A prison in Oxford where the Oxford Methodists carried on ministry.

⁶Thomas Blair was one of the prisoners, jailed on the charge of sodomy.

⁷The other prison in Oxford where the Oxford Methodists ministered.

⁸John Topping was born in Enstone, Oxfordshire in 1694, to William and Mary Topping. William was a farmer, who was buried in Cottisford, Oxfordshire in 1725. Upon being put to death, John was buried there on Aug. 21, 1732. CW reports that Mary was dead by Feb. 9, 1737 (MS Journal).

⁹Thomas Ken, *A Manual of Prayers for the Use of the Scholars of Winchester College, and all other Devout Christians*.

I have obtained leave to go to St. Thomas's workhouse twice a week, and indeed I cannot but hope it will be a noble field of improvement. I'm sure the people stand much in need of instruction, for there is hardly a soul can read in the whole house; and those that can don't understand one word of what they read.

I think I have nothing further to add about our affairs; only I must beg the favour of you, if you can conveniently, to pay Mr. Rivington¹⁰ thirty shillings for my use, and I will repay it when you come to Oxford. Pray don't forget a few Common Prayer Books for the Castle.

You cannot imagine the pleasure it is to me to know that you are engaged every morning in prayers for me. I wish for nine o'clock more eagerly than ever I did before, and I think I begin to perceive what is meant by that union of souls which is so much talked of in Père [Nicolas] Malebranche and Madame [Antoinette] Bourignon, which I never understood before. Good sir, continue your prayers for me, for I feel that I am benefited by them.

I do not envy you the happiness which I know you will have from the conversation of so many pious men as I know you will meet with at London, because I assure myself that I shall have the benefit of it when I have the pleasure to see you again at Oxford.

Mr. [Westley] Hall is not yet come home, so that I am pretty much taken up amongst the poor people and the prisoners, and have not yet had time to consider of any improvements or additions to be made to the list of books for our pupils.

I thank God I have fully conquered my affection for a morning nap, and rise constantly by five o'clock at the furthest, and have the pleasure to see myself imitated by the greatest part of my pupils. I have talked with Mr. Clements, and I hope have made him a proselyte to early rising, though I cannot to constant communion.

Pray God prosper all those designs you have undertaken of doing good at London, and send you a good journey to Oxford. I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your most affectionate friend and most obliged humble (servant,)

J. Clayton

I hope you will not forget to pay my due compliments to Sir John Philipps, Mr. [William] Wogan, and all my other good friends.

Address: '(To the Revd Mr J Wesley) / to be left with Mr. Rivington / Bookseller in St. Paul's Ch: Yard / London'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Clayton, Aug. 1 / 1732'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/36; with no paragraphing except for that beginning, 'You cannot imagine ...'.¹¹

¹⁰Charles Rivington (1688–1742), the leading theological publisher of the time, in London.

¹¹Transcription published in *Works*, 25:331–34.

From John Clayton

Oxon
September 4, 1732

Reverend and Dear Sir,

You know when I took leave of you at Oxford I promised to give you an account of our proceedings in your absence, and in compliance with this promise I am now set down to write you a history of everything that has been done since you left us.

Mrs. [Mary] Topping's affair is of the most importance, and therefore I shall speak of that first. You must know then that last week I writ out a state of her case and sent it up to London to one Mr. Waddilove, an eminent attorney,¹² who sent me down his opinion by last Saturday's post, informing me that the whole of Mr. Sheldon's proceedings were null and invalid, and that if we had but a small sum of money we might sue him for a trespasser, and recover very considerable damages. Upon which I sent for Mrs. Topping's lawyer, who was with me yesterday, and he tells me that the sheep might be recovered for about two and thirty shillings, which I have promised to advance out of Sir John [Phillips]'s money, and he will engage to make better than forty pounds of them, which he says will be more than sufficient for carrying on the suit. He has convinced me that Mr. Short did a very unlawful action in seizing the sheep, and therefore we are obliged, I think, to recover them if possible. They properly belonged to John Topping, and they now fall to his mother as being her son's administrator—who must therefore be obliged to take out letters of administration, which will cost about two and thirty shillings. The lawyer further informed me that all the money Mrs. Topping has paid since her husband's death must be placed to her own account of rent, be the husband's arrears ever so large, because they are due to the minor, and cannot be sued for till he is of age.¹³ So that I hope she will be able to get three times the sum which Short proposed to give her, and indeed Short seems to be apprehensive of it himself, for this afternoon he sent her son over with an offer of £20 and her discharge if she would give them a general release. It seems her note which she gave empowering them to cut the corn signifies nothing—every note being void in law which is given while the party is in duress.

So much for Mrs. Topping. When her lawyer was here I consulted him about Harris's case, and he has promised to clear him in two or three weeks' time, and I have undertaken to answer any charges he may be at out of our funds. As for Mr. Elyson, it is with great difficulty that I can get him to talk with me, he having received express orders from his director not to converse with anyone on points of faith. With much persuasion I have brought him to acknowledge that the doctrine of the Church of England is orthodox in respect to the blessed sacrament, and that she is catholic in her article of the communion of saints. But till I can bring him off from his notion of the church's infallibility (for that is the term which he is taught to use) I find no good can be done with him, and therefore I shall enter upon that point with him tomorrow. His book is not yet come, which is a great disadvantage, for I find the man understands the faults which may be found with the Church of England better than the doctrines maintained by the Church of Rome. I generally go to him every day, but have only happened to meet his wife with him once. I find her so zealous an anti-papist that she almost makes the whole of Christianity to consist in opposing popery. But I hope by God's help, upon my own and my friend's prayers, I shall be able so to work with them both that my labour will not be in vain either to them or myself.

And now for Bocardo. John Stephens and I have had several conferences upon the subject of his release, and are at last come to this resolution: that he shall stay where he is till the lords of his estate hold their court-leet, which will be in three weeks; at which time he will put in a life of a cousin of his who lives at Cumner, who bargains to give him eight pounds. The rest of the money we may easily afford to advance from good Sir John's benefaction. He is mightily content to abide in prison these three weeks,

¹²This is apparently William Waddilove (d. 1747), who was described at the time of his death as 'an eminent solicitor of the Court of Chancery', *London Evening Post*, Apr. 9–11, 1747.

¹³Mary's only surviving son, John having been put to death, was Thomas (b. 1713).

and the more so because he hears that you will be in Oxford by that time. And he would be glad to have his business ended by your assistance.

Mr. Blair is still mightily persecuted in prison,¹⁴ though we take as much pains as possible to quiet the people, but all to no purpose. There was no manner of notice taken of him at the sessions, and there will be no more court-days till the Thursday after Michaelmas,¹⁵ so that you will be able to be in Oxford, I hope, before his trial comes on. I have marshalled his evidence for him according to the best of my skill, and I cannot but think it is such as will convince any reasonable man of his innocence.

The girl pleaded guilty at her trial, and was condemned to be whipped. Her sentence has not yet been executed, and I believe she is not without hopes of getting it remitted. She seems to have no manner of intention to hire herself to Mr. Matthews, and she urges such a reason for it as (if she be serious and sincere) is a sign of a penitent mind—namely, that she will never, if she can help it, live in a place where God is not better served than at Bocardo.

I think I have nothing further to add about the prisoners, but that they are instructed by one or other of us every day as usual, Mr. Whiteland¹⁶ of your college and two of my pupils having lent us their assistance by taking the care of the children both at school and in the workhouse. I take your days, and Mr. [Westley] Hall your brother's. Mr. Dudley called upon me yesterday. But as I had not got his papers in my hands, we parted without fixing upon any point wherein I could be of service to him.

I perceive Sir John [Phillips] did not intend to confine his benefaction entirely to the prisoners, but left it to our discretion to dispose of it to the most necessitous. I have therefore made bold to give a crown to a poor stranger, and to lay out seven or eight shillings in buying shirts for some of our children. They go on with their reading, and are much improved in their catechism. We have fixed upon a rule to make all that are able to learn the collect for the day by heart every Sunday, by which means we shall be sure to keep them out of ill turns and from spending the day in idleness or play.

Sept. 6.

Mr. [Westley] Hall and Mr. Salmon¹⁷ were with me last night so early that I could not possibly make an end of my letter before this afternoon. They both join with me in the sincerest respect to yourself and your brother, and, let me add, to all your family—for one Christian may fairly look on another as his friend. Mr. Watkins has been abroad for some time,¹⁸ so that we were without service at the Castle last Sunday. But Mr. Martin has promised to engage a friend of his to do the duty next Sunday. And I would fain hope that Mr. [William] Smith will be at home in the week after. George Watson¹⁹ has not missed reading prayers there yet. I have accidentally met him and spoke with him half an hour, and cannot help thinking him a sober man in the main. Mr. Spicer²⁰ generally spends two mornings a week with us, and if he deals sincerely with us we have no reason to complain of him. He says he sticks to his resolution of rising in a morning. And the last time we were together he promised us to make an attempt to shake off his idle acquaintances by proposing some useful subject of conversation to them; and if they refused to

¹⁴John Blair, charged with sodomy.

¹⁵The Feast of St. Michael, Sept. 29.

¹⁶Clayton likely means John Whitelamb.

¹⁷Matthew Salmon (b. 1714), of Nantwich, Cheshire, who matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford (Clayton's school) in 1730, and received his BA in 1733.

¹⁸Rev. Richard Watkins (c. 1702–76) matriculated at Wadham College, Oxford, in 1720, taking his BA in 1723 and MA in 1726. He was currently a fellow of Wadham

¹⁹George Watson (b. 1708), of Whitechurch, Shropshire, matriculated at Christ Church in Dec. 1725, receiving his BA in 1729 and MA in 1732.

²⁰Likely John Spicer (b. 1713), of Whitechapel, Middlesex, who matriculated Christ Church in 1729, received his BA in 1733, and his MA in 1735.

handle it, to take that opportunity of letting them know that idle conversation was absolutely unlawful, both as he was a scholar and a Christian. I thank God Mr. Clements rather grows upon our hands. But as for poor Mr. Brown, he has tasted too deeply of the pleasures of living in a gentleman's house for this fortnight to think of either rising in a morning or of fasting.

I think I told you before I left Oxford that I had got a little footing in Corpus [Christi college], by means of one Mr. Patten,²¹ who was chose thither from our college. He has made our affairs be talked on [at] the college by the zeal he has showed in professing the point of fasting, insomuch that several people are staggered. He has made one perfect convert, and last night I received a message from two gentlemen of that college, both of them strangers to me, desiring me to give them leave to wait upon me to hear my reasons for fasting and constant communion. Tomorrow is fixed upon for the parley, and may it please Almighty God to give a happy issue to it. Your sermon²² is under God the occasion of any good that shall be done this way, for I read it to Patten and he was more affected with it than with anything that I had either read or said to him about the necessity of being active. It has likewise engaged another of my pupils in the service, who has promised to try what he can do with a cousin of his at Queen's. I intend to urge it home upon all my acquaintance to fall upon all their friends, by which means I hope in God we shall get at least an advocate for us, if not a brother and a fellow labourer, in every college in town.

Now you are gone we have in good part lost the honourable appellation of 'Methodists', and are talked on pretty warmly by the style and title of 'super[e]rogation men'; a good admonition to remind us that when we have done all we possibly can we are still but unprofitable servants.

Goody Bossum has made an elopement from the workhouse, and God knows where she is gone; so that I fear we have lost our scholar, and that I have thrown away my crown upon her. Thrown away did I say? Not in his sight who can see through the heart, and who accepts as graciously of our pious intentions as of our actions, and will be sure to reward him who fulfils his will to the best of his power, judging according to what a man hath and not according to what he hath not.

I have hardly left room to subscribe myself

Your most affectionate humble servant,

J. Clayton

Address: 'To the Revd. Mr. J. Wesley jun. / At the Revd. Mr. Wesleys at Epworth / To be left at the Post-house / in Gainsborough / Lincolnshire'.

Postmark: '7/SE'.

Annotation: by JW, 'Mr Clay / Sept. 1732'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/37.

²¹Thomas Patten (1714–90), of Warrington, Lancashire, who matriculated Brasenose in Feb. 1730, received his BA from Corpus Christi College in 1733, his MA in 1737, BD in 1744, and DD in 1754.

²²In Feb. 1732 JW abridged Robert Nelson's *The Great Duty of Frequenting the Christian Sacrifice* as a ms sermon titled 'The Duty of Receiving the Lord's Supper' (in MARC, MA 1977/503, Box 3, folder 21). Half a century later he published a refinement of this abridgement as Sermon 101, 'The Duty of Constant Communion', *Works*, 3:427–39.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley¹

[Epworth]
October 25, 1732

Dear Jacky,

I was very glad to hear ye got safe to Oxford, and should have told you so sooner had I been at liberty from pain of body, and other severer trials not convenient to mention. Let everyone enjoy the present hour. Age, and successive troubles, are sufficient to convince any reasonable man that tis a much wiser and safer way to deprecate great afflictions than to pray for them; and that our Lord well knew what was in man when he directed us to pray, 'Lead us not into temptation.'²

I think heretic Clark, in his exposition on the Lord's Prayer, is more in the right than Castaniza concerning temptations.³ His words are as follow:

We are encouraged to glory in tribulation, and to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, etc. Nevertheless tis carefully to be observed that when the Scripture speaks on this manner concerning rejoicing in temptations, it always considers them under this vein, as being experienced, and already in great measure overcome. For otherwise, as to temptations in general, temptations unexperienced, of which we know the danger but not the success, our Saviour teaches us to pray, Lead us not into temptation. And again, Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. Our nature is frail, our passions strong, our wills biased; and our security, generally speaking, consists much more certainly in avoiding great temptations than in conquering them. Wherefore we ought continually to pray that God would be pleased so to order and direct things in this probation state as not to suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but that he would with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. Our Lord directed his disciples, when they were persecuted in one city, to flee into another. And they who refuse to do it when it is in their power lead themselves into temptation, and tempt God.⁴

I can't tell how you represented your case to Dr. Huntington. I have had occasion to make some observation in consumption, and am pretty certain that several symptoms of that distemper are beginning upon you, and that unless you take more care than you do, you'll put the matter past dispute in a little time. But take your own way. I have already given you up, as I have some before which once were very dear to me. Charles, though I believe not in a consumption, is in a fine state of health for a man of two or three and twenty, that can't eat a full meal but he must presently throw it up again. Tis great pity that folks should be no wiser, and that they can't hit the mean in a case where it is so obvious to view that none can mistake it, which do not do it on purpose.

I heartily join with your small society in all their pious and charitable actions, which are intended for God's glory; and am glad to hear Mr. [John] Clayton and Mr. [Westley] Hall has met with desired success. May ye still in such good works go on, and prosper. Though absent in body, I am present with ye in spirit, and daily recommend and commit ye all to divine providence. You do well to wait on the bishop, because tis a point of prudence and civility, though (if he be a good man) I can't think it in the power of anyone to prejudice him against you.

¹Replying to JW's of Sept. 25, which has not survived, beyond the clues to its contents herein.

²Matt. 6:13 and parallels.

³I.e., Lorenzo Scupoli, *The Spiritual Combat; or, The Christian Pilgrim in his Spiritual Conflict and Conquest* (London: Samuel Keble, 1698) [which was originally attributed to Juan de Castañiza]; a book JW had been reading the last couple of months.

⁴Abridging Samuel Clarke, *An Exposition of the Church-Catechism* (London: John & Paul Knapton, 1729), 267–68.

Your arguments against horse races do certainly conclude against masquerades, balls, plays, operas, and all such light and vain diversions, which, whether the gay people of the world will own it or no, does strongly confirm and strengthen the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;⁵ all which we must renounce, or renounce our God, and hope of eternal salvation. I will not say tis impossible for a person to have any sense of religion which frequents those vile assemblies, but I never throughout the course of my long life knew so much as one serious Christian that did. Nor can I see how a lover of God can have any relish for such vain amusements.

*The Life of God in the Soul of Man*⁶ is an excellent good book, and was an acquaintance of mine many years ago; but I have unfortunately lost it. There's many good things in Castaniza, more in [Richard] Baxter; yet are neither without faults, which I overlook for the sake of their virtues. Nor can I say of all the books of divinity I have read which is the best; one is best at one time, one at another, according to the temper and disposition of the mind.

Mr. [Matthew] Horbery is for Oxford soon, by whom if I can I will write to Mr. [John] Whitelamb, to whom pray give my love and service, and tell him, though I can't show my esteem for him all the ways I would, yet I daily remember him.

I must tell ye, Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln, and Mr. Charles Wesley, Student of Christ Church, that ye are two scrubby travellers, and sink your characters strangely by eating nothing on the road, <...⁷> to save charges. I wonder ye are not ashamed of yourselves. Surely if ye will but give yourselves leave to think a little, ye will return to a better mind.

Your sisters send their love to you and Charles, and I my love and blessing to ye both.

Adieu

Your father is in a very bad state of health; he sleeps little, and eats less. He seems not to have any apprehension of his approaching exit, but I fear he has but a short time to live. Tis with much pain and difficulty that he performs divine service on the Lord's day, which sometimes he is forced to contract very much. Everybody observes his decay but himself, and people really seem much concerned both for him and his family.

The two girls,⁸ being uneasy in the present situation, do not apprehend the sad consequences which (in all appearance) must attend his death so much as I think they ought to do; for as bad as they think their condition now, I doubt not it will be far worse when his head is laid.

Address: 'To The Revd. Mr Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Postmark: indecipherable, and '30/OC'. *Charges:* ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW, in abbreviate script, 'Eating on the road / J. Whitelamb / my father / Society'.

Source: holograph; Melbourne, Australia, State Library of Victoria (photocopy: MARC, DDWF 2/10).⁹

⁵Cf. 1 John 2:16.

⁶Henry Scougal, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* (London: Downing and Strahan, 1726).

⁷Parts of two lines of writing (about six words), have been clipped from the letter.

⁸Mary and Kezia were living at Epworth.

⁹Transcription published in *Works*, 25:344–46; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 151–54.

From Richard Morgan Sr.

[Dublin, Ireland]
November 25, 1732

Reverend Sir,

Your favour of the 20th past was delayed in its passage,¹ I believe by contrary winds, or it had not been so long unanswered. I give entire credit to every thing and every fact you relate. It was ill judged of my poor son² to take to fasting with[out] regard to his health, which I knew nothing of, or I should have advised him against it. He was inclined to piety and virtue from his infancy. I must own I was much concerned at the strange accounts which were spread here of some extraordinary practices of a religious society which he had engaged in at Oxford, which you may be sure lost nothing in the carriage, lest through his youth and immaturity of judgment he might be hurried into zeals and enthusiastic notions that may prove pernicious. But now indeed that piety and holiness of life which he practised affords me some comfort in the midst of my affliction for the loss of him, having full assurance of his being for ever happy. The good account you are pleased to give of your own and your friends' conduct in point of duty and religious offices, and the zealous approbation of them by the good old gentleman your father, signified in a manner and style becoming the best of men, reconciles and recommends that method of life to me, and makes me almost wish that I were one amongst you. I am very much obliged to you for the great pains you have been at in transcribing so long and so particular an account of your transactions for my perusal, and shall be always ready to vindicate you from any calumny or aspersion that I shall hear cast upon you. I am much obliged for yours and your brother's great civilities and assistances to my dearest son. I thank your brother Charles for his kind letter which I received,³ and the author of those lines you sent me, for the regard he has shown to his memory.⁴ If ever I can be serviceable to any of you in this kingdom, I beg you will let me know, and I shall with the utmost pleasure and cheerfulness undertake your commands. I am, with respects to your brother, etc., sir,

Your most obliged, most obedient humble servant,

Richard Morgan

Address: 'To the Revd Mr / John Wesley, fellow of / Lincoln College in / Oxford'.

Frank: 'Hu. Armagh. These', i.e. Hugh Boulter, Archbishop of Armagh.

Postmark: 'DUBLIN' and '1/DE'. *Charges:* ((2)) and large scrawled 'FR[EE]'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Morgan, Senr / Nov. 25, 1732'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/97; cf. Morgan MSS, 35–37.⁵

¹Morgan is replying to JW's letter of Oct. 19–21 (*Works*, 25:335–44).

²William Morgan, Richard's elder son, whose health had declined over the preceding year, returned to Dublin in 1732 and died on Aug. 26.

³This letter has not survived.

⁴The poem by Samuel Wesley Jr., 'On the Death of Mr. Morgan of Christ Church'.

⁵Transcription published in *Works*, 25:346–47.

From Richard Morgan Sr.

[Dublin]
February 17, 1732/3

Dear Sir,

I have your favour of the 3rd instant.¹ You judge right that I never received your brother's letter of the 4th of October, which if I had should not have lain unanswered. I did myself apprehend that he had been so kind as to write, and that it had by some means miscarried, and therefore presumed to write to him to that purpose a post or two ago, before I received your last.

If you mean that I have duplicates here of any books my dear son left behind him at Christ Church from a printed catalogue I sent him of a study of books I had bought for him in Dublin, I made a present of that purchase to my daughter's husband, who is a clergyman, so that I have none of those books left, and should be glad to make up a small study of those at Oxford, and some others he has himself, for my only son now living.² But if there be duplicates there of any books, one of each sort is at your brother's service.

I assure you, sir, without any dissimulation or flattery, I rejoice sincerely at the recovery of the good old gentleman, your father. And I really am concerned that the scorners of the university continue so malevolent. I could wish they would rather meet you at least halfway in imitation of piety and goodness. I must say that these censures have in a great measure ceased here, and I am comforted by my acquaintance in telling me that I should grieve the less from the assurance we have of my dear son's happiness with God after such a course of piety and godliness that he had engaged in. I pray God to conduct us all to meet together in happiness hereafter. Be assured you shall never want a weak advocate in me to defend you against any calumny that I can hear you or your friends aspersed with. Pray my salutations to your good father when you write to him, and your brother of Christ Church: for I am with great sincerity theirs, and, sir,

Your very affectionate servant,

Richard Morgan

Address portion does not survive.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Morgan Senr / Feb. 17. 1733'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/98; cf. Morgan MSS, 38–39.³

¹Morgan apparently mistook the '8' for a '3' in the letter (which is not known to survive) that JW records writing on Feb. 8 in his diary.

²I.e., Richard Morgan Jr., who matriculated at Lincoln College later that year.

³Transcription published in *Works*, 25:349.

From Richard Morgan Sr.

[Dublin]

March 10, 1732/3

Dear Sir,

I am favoured with yours of the 28th past,¹ and am very sorry to find by it that anything has happened to give you any uneasiness. I give you my word and honour that I never read or showed your letter to me of October last to any mortal, but laid it up safe, and have it so still. Neither did I communicate to anyone the contents of my letter to my poor son, which you make mention of, so that they must have come to be known by some other means in England. I have indeed taken occasion, to a very few with whom I had some discourse formerly on the subject of those reports then spread abroad of my son and his associates, to vindicate him and them from those aspersions, from the several hints and accounts you were so kind to furnish me with in your epistle, but never produced the letter itself. I am sure that both you and your learned friends in England are much better judges how to manage the pamphlet you mention than I can pretend to be, and am the more at a loss to give any opinion concerning it because I am not able to collect from your letter whether it is intended as a satire or vindication.² I am apt to believe that you are so kind as to be under some concern lest if this pamphlet should fall in my way it might give me some trouble. But pray let no such thought disturb you, for you fully satisfied me before in everything. Nothing that your adversaries can say or write can alter my good opinion both of you and your actions. I am really sorry that your good designs should be so misrepresented and misconstrued. I hope in time they may meet with due rewards in this world; I am sure they will in the next.

I hope my last went safe to you, where I acquaint you that I never received your brother's letter of last October, wherein you told me he consulted me about some duplicates of my dear son's books, etc. And I wrote a few lines before to your brother presuming that he had been so kind as to write to me concerning the matter. I desired him to transact for me soon after my son's death, and acquainted him that if he wrote any such letter, it never came to hand. Pray, present my humble service to him, and let him know that I should be much obliged to him if he would negotiate those small affairs for me which I took the liberty to recommend to him in my first letter, and that he would be pleased to favour me with a line to let me know how those matters stand. And if ever it lies in my power to oblige either him or you, I shall most cheerfully do it, for I am, with great sincerity, his and, dear sir,

Your very affectionate humble servant,

Richard Morgan

Address portion does not survive.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 2008/015; cf. Morgan MSS, 39–41.³

¹JW's letter of Feb. 28 does not appear to survive.

²[Samuel Richardson?], *The Oxford Methodists: being some account of a society of young gentlemen in that city, so denominated; setting forth their rise, views, and designs. With some occasional remarks on a letter inserted in Fog's Journal of December 9th, relating to them. In a letter from a gentleman near Oxford to his friend at London* (London, Roberts, 1733); this was published in February.

³Transcription published in *Works*, 25:349–50.

From Kezia Wesley

Epworth
March 26, 1733

Dear Brother,

I can't help looking upon you as a being placed in a rank so far superior to myself that I am not in my present state of imperfection fit to converse with you either by word or letter.¹ Yet you was perfectly acquainted with all my failings before you contracted friendship, and did or ought to have considered whether I was a person worthy of love. If you thought me incapable of friendship, 'twas not kind to gain my affection when you knew in a little time you might quit the correspondence. If you discern any great fault in me which you have not before observed, it would be more friendly if you would be so good as to tell me what it is, that I may immediately correct it (before you withdraw your affection from me). I can scarce think your long silence proceeds from my showing more tenderness towards you when you was here than I ever showed before. Sure you are not what they call a true man—kind when you doubted of my affection, and neglect me because you have reason to believe I love you.

My father is much better, but is not yet well enough to read prayers either at home or at church. His illness has produced the effect I expected. It seems to me contrary to reason that a religious man that acts according to his judgment, and does anything because he thinks it his duty, should alter his opinion by sickness if it be an error in the judgment. It is so confirmed by fifty years practice that now it is invincible.

'The weakness of human nature makes it necessary that persons of mature judgment should have the command and instruction of young people. Parents are required to take care of, provide for, and instruct their children.'² But I can't think the duty and obedience of a child arises from the parent's being the instrument of its coming into life, but from his protection, tenderness, affection, and continual endeavours to make it happy. The duty of a child (according to the weakness of my judgment) appears to be founded on gratitude. If on the contrary a parent will make no allowance for the follies of youth, nor takes any care to support, protect, or instruct it, but as far as it is in their power makes life a burden, all the duty owing to such a parent (according to my notion of things) is not doing what is forbid, and doing all that is commanded.

I think we may be sometimes uneasy and even complain of our afflictions to a friend, without being guilty of blasphemy, or so much as thinking God wants either wisdom, power, or love whereby he should make us happy.

You may remember when you was here and asked me whether I had advised any of my acquaintance to fasting. I have not yet, for two reasons: first because people are so averse to the giving themselves pain that there is scarce a possibility of my prevailing with any to act contrary to what they have been used to; the second is I meet with such discouragement myself that I can but just stand my ground. If I be ill, whether it proceeds from cold or any other cause, 'tis always imputed to my abstemious way of living, as 'fasting is not an essential part of religion, but only an instrumental duty'. If people can attain the end without using the means, I can't see any necessity for pressing this duty. I should be glad to know your thoughts in these two particulars, if it won't detain you from better employment.

And let me know when I shall have the happiness of seeing you. I am sorry you injure me so much as to think if I was to contract a friendship with another it would lessen my love to you, and assure you it has quite contrary effect. The more I converse with any person else, the more I esteem the

¹JW's diary does not record a letter to Kezia since Nov. 11, 1732.

²Kezia quotes the opening line of an essay titled 'Filial Duty Founded on Gratitude' that was published in the *Universal Spectator*, no. 123 (Nov. 11, 1732) and reprinted in *Gentleman's Magazine* 2 (1732): 1038.

friendship of my dear brother, who makes it his chief aim to instruct³ me in those virtues which will make me truly happy in a state of being in which there will be no fears nor apprehensions, sickness or separation.

I am, dear brother,
Yours till death,

Kezia Wesley

The address portion has not survived.

Endorsement: by JW, '1733 S[ister] K[ezia] March 26'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 13/3.

³Orig., 'instructing'.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

[Westminster]
June 21, 1733

...¹ Your reasons for not standing for Hetty's child are good.² And yet were they as good again,³ there is one against them that would make them good for nothing—namely, the child will hardly be christened at all unless you and I stand. *E malis minimum*.⁴ The charge need not fright, for I'll lay down. Tell me as soon as you can your answer to this paragraph. Some in Johnson's hold the matter to be *indifferent*, and so excuse themselves. I'll find a *representative* for you, as well as *pence*, if you do but give me my commission. Write soon. I am, dear John,

Your affectionate [friend and brother],

S. Wesley

Source: published extract; Clarke, *Memoirs*, (1823) 389; (1836) 2:174; (1848) 450.

¹The letter from which Clarke took this extract is not known to survive.

²Samuel Jr. had asked JW to serve as a godparent for Amelia Mary Wright, born to William and Mehetabel (Wesley) Wright earlier that year. JW had declined on the grounds that he could not fulfill the responsibilities involved.

³I.e., 'were they twice as good'.

⁴'The least evil' option.

From the Rev. John Clayton

[Manchester]
July [25], 1733

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have been thinking upon the two points which you proposed to my consideration in your last,¹ and must acknowledge myself to be utterly unable to form any judgment upon them which will be serviceable to you. My own rule was to spend an hour every Friday in looking over my diary, and observing the difference between it and the preceding week, after which I examine the resolutions set down in the account of my last weekly examination and inquire how I have kept them. And I then see what others are necessary to be formed, which I write down at the end of my diary for every week, that so they may be materials for my subsequent examination. As to your question about Saturday, I can only answer it by giving an account how I spend it. I do not look upon it as a preparation for Sunday, but as a festival itself; and therefore I have continued festival prayers for the three primitive hours and for morning and evening, from the Apostolical Constitutions, which I think I communicated to you whilst I was at Oxford. I look upon Friday as my preparation for the celebration of both the Sabbath and the Lord's day, the first of which I observe much what like a common saint's day, or as one of the inferior holy days of the church. I bless God I have generally contrived to have the Eucharist celebrated on Saturdays as well as the other holy days, for the use of myself and the sick people which I visit.

Dr. Deacon² gives his humble service to you, and lets you know that the worship and discipline of the primitive church have taken up so much of his time that he has never read the Fathers with a particular view to their moral doctrines, and therefore cannot furnish you with the testimonies you want out of his collections. However, if you will give me a month's time, I will try what I can do for you. I have made some progress in the earliest authors, and should have made more had I not been interrupted, first with the public ceremony of the bishop's triennial visitation,³ and secondly with the blessing of a visit which the truly primitive Bishop of Man⁴ made to our town—with both which affairs the clergy have been almost wholly taken up for a week.

I was at Dr. Deacon's when your letter came to hand, and we had a deal of talk about your scheme of avowing yourselves a society, and fixing upon a set of rules. The Doctor seemed to think you had better let it alone. For to what end would it serve? It would be no additional tie upon yourselves, and perhaps a snare for the consciences of those weak brethren that might choose to come among you. Observing the stations and weekly communion are duties which stand upon a much higher footing than a rule of a society; and they who can set aside the command of God and the authority of his Church will

¹This JW letter, probably of July 11, is not known to survive.

²Thomas Deacon (1697–1753) was ordained by Jeremy Collier to the nonjuring priesthood in 1716. In addition to his theological studies, Deacon studied medicine with Dr. Richard Mead. He served several non-juror congregations in London before moving to Manchester around 1722, where he became a leading physician. During Deacon's years in Manchester, the city became a significant hub of Jacobite and Non-juror activity, an influence shared with the Wesley brothers particularly through John Clayton. Deacon strongly espoused ecclesial independence of the non-jurors from the state and opposed reunion with the Church of England. This led to his consecration in 1733 by Scottish bishop Archibald Campbell as a bishop of what became the Orthodox British Church.

³Samuel Peploe (1668–1752) was currently Bishop of Chester.

⁴Thomas Wilson (1663–1755) had been Bishop of Sodor and Man since 1698.

hardly, I doubt, be tied by the rules of a private society. As to the mixture,⁵ Mr. Colley⁶ told me he would assure me it was constantly used at Christ Church. However, if you have reason to doubt it, I would have you inquire; but I cannot think the want of it a reason for not communicating. If I could receive where the mixture was used I would, and therefore I used to prefer the Castle to Christ Church. But if not, I should not think myself any further concerned in the matter than as it might be some way or other in my power to get it restored. Pray be so kind as to enquire <...⁷>well took my name out of the book. If not, give order to have <...>ke up money of Clement's the bookseller to pay off the expense< ... At the same time pray call upon one Mr. Hollinshead⁸ of our college for four pictures of mine—viz., White Chapel altar piece, Mary Magdalene, and our two founders—and get them sent up by any convenient opportunity to Mr. [Charles] Rivington, who will send them down to me. My best respects attend your brother.⁹ I must beg the favour of him to give himself the trouble of writing out the hymn to God the Father and God the Son for me; a person of quality, Lady Katherine Gray, borrowed mine and has lost them.

I am, dear sir,

Your most affectionate friend and servant,

John Clayton

Address: 'To / the Revd. Mr. Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Postmark: 'MAN / CHESTER', '27/IY.' *Charges:* ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Clat. July 1733'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/38.¹⁰

⁵The mixture of water and wine in the communion chalice, one of the 'usages' considered obligatory by Thomas Deacon and many other non-jurors.

⁶Rev. Jonathan Colley (c. 1677–1738), Chaplain at Christ Church, Oxford from 1708 until his death.

⁷A small portion of the manuscript is torn away, affecting about two words in each of three lines of text.

⁸Allinson Hollinshead (b. 1713), of Chorley, Lancashire, matriculated at Brasnose College, Oxford in Mar. 1732, and received his BA in 1735.

⁹In this case, Clayton is commending Samuel Wesley Jr. The hymns requested are surely the two by Samuel Jr. included by JW in *CPH* (1737), 11–12; which were first published by Samuel Jr. in *Weekly Miscellany* 85 (July 27, 1734) and 87 (Aug. 10, 1734).

¹⁰Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 25:352.

From Emilia Wesley¹

[Gainsborough]
September 4, [1733]

Dear Brother,

I had expected long a letter from you. Now I answer speedily, for several reasons. First, that you not think me disobliged by anything in your last. And secondly, for fear should I defer writing that you might be unanswered till we meet in the other world, and you are one of those few whose good opinion I would possess if possible. Last Sunday I fell ill, and have continued so all this week. The event is doubtful, nor have I been so much concerned about it as to let Dr. Greathead know, though he be in town.² But enough of this, now to yours.

I have just cause to complain of your unkindness, who could act so unfriendly a part when you was at Lincoln as to conceal from me your want of money. What was in my power, you know you might have commanded. Nor am I ever unprovided of some small sum to help a friend in distress. Were I capable of entertaining any thoughts to your disadvantage, surely I should conclude you had laid aside your friendship and was yourself one of those persons so prejudiced against me, who could hinder me from enjoying one of the greatest pleasures of life (at least of mine), the being useful to those I love. You may assure yourself, I can scarce forgive you.

I know not the ladies you mention, nor in all likelihood ever must, but am glad you met with company and conversation pleasing to you. Once I had vanity enough to believe none was more so than my own, fondly imagining that the same satisfaction was enjoyed by both, where I thought the love was equal. But in one respect I clearly see mine far superior, because it is impossible to make any impressions in my heart to your disadvantage by any little tales behind your back, which I find the spleen of my sisters can do (in yours) to mine.

I cannot imagine what our folks ail at me. Polly, Patty, and Kez I have never injured that I know of; Nancy I love much, and hope and believe she does the same to me.³ All that they ever complain of that I know is my not writing to them, and over and over I have told them that I have neither money, time, or inclination to hold up a correspondence with every one of them. And if they will take that amiss, why so they may. Emme will never trouble her head about it. As for Mrs. [Mehtabel] Wright and poor Suky,⁴ I pity them both but never will trust either; want of honesty in one and prudence in the other makes them incapable of being friends. But I am not conscious to myself of having done either of them an injury, except grieving for the guile of one and the misery of the other.

So the ruin of my health and the hazard of my senses can be accounted one. Surely my sense of honour has contracted itself into a very comfortable compass. I enjoy, I thank God, a clear reputation where I live, and as much of the esteem and love of my neighbours as any person in my rank of life ever did; nay, much more. My credit is good. And when I am weary of staying here, I have several ways of life in my power, which I am courted to accept of. And as for my relations, as I am not troublesome at present to any of them, why if they will be civil they may; if crusty for naught, I do not much regard so long as I am independent on them. And so farewell to my good natured sisters, and my loving father, who I do not doubt came in for his share.

Being yet neither very old nor very ugly, several compliments and civil things are often said to me. But never in good earnest (since my fatal loss of [Robert] L[eybourne]) was I flattered so highly and yet so agreeably as in your last letter. I believe you desire I should love you. Your words and actions have

¹Replying to JW's letter of Aug. 22, which is not known to survive.

²Dr. Edward Greathead, of Lincoln, who had attended to Emilia for several years while she lived there, prior to her move to Gainsborough.

³Using the family's nicknames for Mary, Martha, Kezia, and Anne.

⁴Susanna (Wesley) Ellison.

sufficiently declared it. You know something of the world, though not so much as myself, yet enough to inform you that not one person in a thousand, scarce one will be met with during your whole life, who will bear to be told of their faults without hating the reprove. Yet this special person you suppose me to be. For certainly no motive by my good would induce you to hazard disoblighing her who you have reason to believe loves you the best of any of your relations, perhaps of any in the world. But you guess right in your opinion of me, and I thank you for your freedom. But your advice in the case before us is like a dose of physic sometime after the distemper is removed. Uncharitable truth (for no otherwise was I ever guilty) was always contrary to my judgment, though too much my practice. I take it to be infringing that great command of doing as we would be done by others, and about a fortnight since laid aside at once that raillery which please all but myself. Not but you are unjust in taxing me with an uncompassionate temper. Most certainly that I am not, but too much the contrary. There is this wide difference between the faults and misfortunes of men, that they can help the one but not the other, and therefore may very justly be laughed at for the former, but pitied for the latter. But I, having laid all that aside, have no more to say to it.

Were you in the right so far to trust and try my friendship? Why then may I not follow the example? Or rather, why did I not take the same liberty before it was too late to do good by it? Why, for this fond reason, that I could not on any account prevail with myself to give you pain, as I fancied I should if I blamed your conduct. Now it is too late, and therefore may sleep forever.

Brother Sam these two or three years last past has been exceeding kind and civil to me. Methinks his opinion seems to be altered, and he looks on me no longer with the same eyes he did when he so cruelly destroyed my happiness.⁵ He proffers to lend me money if I want it, and indeed is now very good. Keep then the remembrance of lost happiness. Let me if possible keep in mind the good he would do me, forget the ill he did. At least in the quiet grave I shall cease to mourn from the total separation of unhappy L[eybourne] and myself.

Illness will not permit me to say more but that I am

Your friend and loving sister,

Emilia Wesley

Address: 'To the Revd Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxford / by way of London'.

Postmark: ' 7/SE'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] Em Sept. 4, 1733'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 6/6.

⁵Samuel Wesley Jr. had helped end the relationship between Emilia and Robert Leybourne.

From the Rev. John Clayton¹

Manchester
September 10, 1733

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I was last week at Dr. Lever's,² where I but narrowly missed of seeing Mr. Brooke of our college, who came the evening after I left Alkington. I saw Dr. Lever today, who joins with me in sincere respects to your brother and yourself. His new dignity, and his being put in commission of the peace, have at present unfitted him for serious talk; and therefore I must wait for a more favourable opportunity of pressing those virtues which you first convinced him of the necessity of. Dr. [Thomas] Deacon tells me that he had no view in fixing the psalms for common days, but after reading your letter is convinced of the expediency of serving any of those three ends you mention. The feasts and fasts were the days that he principally regarded; but he would take it as a favour from you, would you communicate to me any improvements you may possibly make in it. He thinks your third rule would be most expedient, namely to put together such psalms as best explain and illustrate each other. And he knows not but that on this scheme the proper psalms for festivals and fasts may be more advantageously fixed by the transposing some from the first, second, etc., Sundays to those which have psalms that better answer them. He will consider the point as soon as he has leisure, but desires in the meantime that you would let us know your thoughts upon the matter, because his order for reading the Psalter is likely soon to see the light, being to be published with a collection of Primitive Devotions, both public and private, which is even now in the press.³

Poor Miss Potter.⁴ I wonder not that she is fallen; where humility is not the foundation the superstructure cannot be good. And yet I am sorry to hear the tidings of her, especially that she has a great man for her confessor, who dissuades her from constant communion. I am sure she has great occasion to use all the means of grace which providence provides for her, and hope in time that God will open her eyes to see the great need she has of help from above. Methinks, though, I would not persuade you to leave off reading with her. Who knows whether you may not again raise her to the eminence from which she is fallen? At least, though she neglect the weightier matter of the law, yet keep up in her that reverent respect she bears, if even by tithing anise and cummin.⁵

As to reading the ancients, I fancy Cotelerii *Bibliotheca Patrum Apostolicorum* would be the best book to begin with.⁶ For though I will not say that all the works there contained are genuine, yet I dare avow them to be very ancient, and to contain the primitive doctrine and discipline of the Church, though published under feigned names. You will find a dissertation upon every work which contains the several testimonies of fathers and councils whereby its authority is confirmed, and according to the evidence

¹ Replying to JW's of Aug. 29, which has not survived, but to which this reply offers some clues.

² Darcy Lever (1703–42), owner of the manor of Alkington, Lancashire, north of Manchester, had been awarded a LL.D. (doctor of jurisprudence) degree in 1733.

³ *A Compleat Collection of Devotions, both publick and private; taken from the Apostolical Constitutions, the Ancient Liturgies, and the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England* (London, 1734). Deacon included an extract from JW's 'Essay upon the Stationary Fasts' in the Appendix (72–74).

⁴ A Methodist group for Oxford townspeople had met in her home, under JW's oversight, since Feb. 1733, though by the end of the year it had become either defunct or independent of him. JW had written to her on Aug. 31, 1733, and apparently informed Clayton of his disappointment in her.

⁵ Cf. Matt. 23:23.

⁶ Jean-Baptiste Cotelier, *SS. patrum qui temporibus apostolicis florverunt: Barnabae, Cementis, Hermae, Ignatii, Polycapi; opera edita et inedita, vera et suppositicia. Una cum Clementis, Ignatii, Polycarpi actis atque Martyriis*, 2 vols. (Paris: Petri Le Petit, 1672).

produced you must judge of the authenticness of the several pieces. The epistles of St. Clement are universally owned to be his. And so are the smaller epistles of St. Ignatius; and indeed I think Whiston (in his *Primitive Christianity*⁷) has urged such arguments in defence of the larger as can never be answered. St. Barnabas's epistle and Hermas's Pastor are works of the apostolic age, as may be proved by their internal characters both of language and doctrine, whether they be the works of the venerable authors they are ascribed to or no. The Apostolic Canons are learnedly defended by Bishop Beveridge, and they sufficiently vindicate the Constitutions.⁸ The recognitions of Clement are generally reckoned the most modern piece in these two volumes, but they are really a most admirable work.

And now for the last page of your letter. I would answer it—and yet for my unworthiness, I dare not; for my ignorance, I cannot. How should I direct my instructor in the school of Christ, or teach you who am but a babe in religion? However, I must be free to tell you my sentiments of what you inquire about. On Wednesdays and Fridays I have for some time past used the office for Passion week out of Spinckes' *Devotions*,⁹ and bless God for it. I have found it very useful to excite in me that love of God and sorrow for having offended him which makes up the first main branch of repentance. You know it consists of meditations on our Saviour's life, and such meditations as are all of them closed with proper devotions. I could only wish I was provided with two such offices, one for Wednesday and the other for Friday. Refer your last question to Mr. [William] Law. I dare not give directions for spending that time which I consume in bed, nor teach you that rise at four, when I indulge myself in sleep till five. Dear sir, pray for me that I may press forward in the path of perfection, and at length attain the land of everlasting life.

Adieu.

J. C.

I believe you will see a young gentleman of my acquaintance who is a very pious man, but who greatly stands in need of Christian prudence to direct him, in particular with regard to his conduct toward his parents. His religion sometimes seems to savour of self-will. Instruct and save him.

Address: 'To / the Revd. Mr. Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln Col: / Oxon'.

Postmark: 'MAN / CHESTER', '14/SE'. *Charges:* ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Cl. Sept. 10, 1733 / of the Fathers'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/39.¹⁰

⁷William Whiston, *Primitive Christianity Revived*, 5 vols. (London: for the author, 1711–12).

⁸William Beveridge, *Synodikon, sive Pandectae Canonum SS. Apostolorum et Conciliorum ab Ecclesia Graeca Receptorum*, 2 vols. (Oxford: William Wells & Robert Scott, 1672).

⁹Nathaniel Spinckes, *The True Church of England Man's Companion in the Closet; or, A Complete Manual of Private Devotions* (London: Charles Rivington, 1721).

¹⁰Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 25:355–56.

From Henry Newman (SPCK)¹

[London]
September 25, 1733

‘in answer to his of [c. Aug 23] that the packet desired was sent 28 Aug, value 4s. 2d.’

Source: abstract in letter book; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D2/22, #15576.²

¹The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), especially through its publication of devotional and pastoral literature, furnished a valuable support for beleaguered piety in JW's day. JW had been elected a corresponding member on Aug. 3, 1732, requesting his first packet of books on Jan. 1, 1733. Henry Newman (1670–1743), a New Englander by birth, son of a Congregational minister, and graduate of Harvard, served from 1708 to his death as secretary of the SPCK, in which role he had frequent correspondence with JW between 1735–38.

²A transcription was published in JW, *Works*, 25:729.

From Richard Morgan Sr.

Dublin
November 22, 1733

Reverend Sir,

I had the favour of yours,¹ and am very thankful for your care and tenderness about my son, who I am sure will observe your advice and directions in everything. My concern about my only son brings the misfortunes of my other son fresh into my mind, and obliges me now to impart to you, and only to you, what I have hitherto concealed from all men, as far as it could be kept secret.

After he had spent about six weeks with me in Dublin, and the physicians having agreed that the air at Oxford was better for his health than the Irish air, when I was obliged to take a journey with my Lord Primate into his diocese my dear son was to set out on his journey to England the same day, which he accordingly did. He rode an easy pad, and was to make easy journeys through part of this kingdom to see some relations in the way, and to take shipping at Cork, from which there is a short passage to Bristol, and from thence the journey not great to Oxford.

He travelled twelve miles the first day, attended by that careful servant that was with him at Oxford; the servant observed him to act and talk lightly and incoherently that day. He slept little or none all night, but often cried out that the house was in fire, and used other wild expressions.

The second day he grew worse, threw his bridle over the horse's head, and would neither guide him himself nor let the man guide him, whom he charged to stay behind, saying that God would guide him. The horse turned about, went in side roads, and went to a disused quarry filled with water to drink, when my poor child fell off, and had then like to have been lost, the servant not daring to do but as he bid him, whom he often beat and struck. The servant then finding him deprived of all understanding, and outrageous, by great art and management brought him back to Dublin.

Two of our most eminent physicians, and the Surgeon General, were brought to attend him. An express was sent after me, with whom I hastened back to town. He was put into a room [up] two pair of stairs, and the sashes nailed down, yet he found an opportunity to run to one of the windows, tore it down, though nailed, and was more than half out before he could be caught, but was happily saved. He was raging mad, and three men set over him to watch him and hold, and by the direction of the physicians he was threatened with ropes and chains, which were produced to him and rattled.

In his madness he used frequently to say that enthusiasm was his madness, repeated often, 'O religious madness!' that they had hindered him from being now with God—meaning their hindering him from throwing himself out at the window—and named some other persons and things that I shan't mention, but in his greatest rage never cursed or swore, or used any profane expressions. Some have told me since that they looked upon him to be disordered for some time before in his head, but God was pleased to take him to himself in seven days' time, which no doubt the blisterings and severities used by the physicians and surgeon for his recovery precipitated.

These are melancholy reflections, which makes me earnestly desire that my surviving son should not go into those over-zealous ways which (as is apprehended) contributed to this great misfortune which finished my other son. I would have him live a sober, virtuous, and religious life, and to go to church and sacraments according to the statutes and customs of his college; but for young people to pretend to be

¹Richard Morgan Jr. had arrived in Oxford on Oct. 30, flouting university statutes by bringing a greyhound with him, causing Wesley to note in his diary, 'Ill prospect'. Wesley found that setting him straight was an unrewarding task, and in reporting a modicum of progress to his father on Nov. 6 also urged that greater strictness might be needed. This is Richard Morgan Sr.'s reply to that letter, of which not even a copy has survived, although CW reserved pp. 47–48 in his notebook for such a copy. Not until Morgan's letter of Jan. 31, 1734, did he make clear to JW that his sudden switch to a description of William Morgan's death was intended as a device to secure JW's sympathy, so as to relax what he feared might be JW's undue restrictions upon Richard Jr.

more pure and holy than the rest of mankind is a dangerous experiment. As to charitable subscriptions and contributions, I wholly debar him from making any, because he has not one shilling of his own but what I give him, which I appropriate wholly to his maintenance, education, and moderate and inoffensive recreation and pleasures, and I believe, as a casuist, you will agree with me that it is injustice, and consequently sinful, rather than virtue, to apply my money any other way than as I appropriate it. He must leave me to measure out my own charities, and to distribute them in such manner and proportion as I shall think proper. I hope you will not suspect from anything I have said that I intend the least reflection or disrespect to you, for if I did not think very well of you, and had not a great opinion of your conduct and abilities, I should not put my only son under your tuition, which I think is the best proof a man can give of his good esteem and opinion of another.

The tragical account given you of my poor deceased son, my son Richard can inform you of as well as I, which I charged him to say nothing of at Oxford, but now he may to you if you think proper to inquire of him about it. And I hope I may be excused for being solicitous to prevent my present son's falling into extremes, which it is *thought* were so prejudicial to my other. I sent a bill of £50 by the last post to Mr. James Huey, merchant in Aldermanbury, London, with directions to transmit the value to you, which I hope is done. I long to have Mr. Lasher paid. As I mentioned in my former letter to you, I shall begrudge no money that is for my son's benefit and advantage, who I would have live as decently as other gents of his station. I am very desirous that he should keep a regular account, that he may attain to a habit of it, knowing the great use and benefit of accounts to all men. I shall depend upon your letting me know when a further supply will be wanting. Pray my respects to your brother, and believe me to be

Your very affectionate and most humble servant,

Richard Morgan

Address portion does not survive.

Endorsement: by JW (in left margin of first page), 'Death of Mr. Mo[rgan]!'

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/99; cf. Morgan MSS, 49–52.²³

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:357–59. There is no paragraphing in either the original or the transcription in Morgan MSS.

³Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 25:355–56.

**John Wesley's In-Correspondence (1731–35)
Wesley Works Editorial Project**

(page 73)

From Henry Newman (SPCK)

[London]
November 29, 1733

'to JW at Oxon in answer to his of 16 Nov. that the books desired were sent 20 Nov. to Mr. Rivington in St. Paul's Church Yark, value 3.10.8 and half.'

Source: abstract in letter book; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D2/22,
#15669

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley¹

[Epworth]

Tuesday, January 1, 1733/4

Dear Son,

I was highly pleased with receiving a letter from you last Sunday, for I have long wanted to write to you, but knew not whether you were at London or Oxford. My principal business with you was about [John] Whitelamb, to reprehend your too great caution in not informing me what his moral character is, and about his intrigue at Medley.² Had you let me know of the looseness of his principles, and his disreputable practices, I should never have forwarded his going into orders, neither would I have suffered him to renew his addresses to Molly,³ after such a notorious violation of his promises to her.

Indeed when he came hither first he was so full of his new doxy that he could not forbear telling Molly and Kezzy of his amour, which the former informed me of, and I discoursed him about it, and would have convinced him that it was sinful and dishonourable for him to court another woman when he was pre-engaged, [but] he was not much moved with what I could say. So I told him plainly, he should presently renounce one or the other, and that if he did not presently write to Robinson⁴ (who is his pimp) and tell him that he would never more have any conversation with his doll at Medley, I would immediately send Molly away, where he should never see her more; though withal I advised him rather to take his Betty than your sister, for I thought her a much fitter wife for him. Besides, I was extremely unwilling Molly should ever marry at all.

But Molly, who was fond of him to the last degree, was of another mind, and persuaded him to write to Robinson, and show me the letter. I did not much approve it, because he seemed to justify those vile practices, which I thought he ought to have condemned; yet to satisfy her importunity I permitted them to go on. Whitelamb wrote to ask your father's leave to marry his daughter, which Mr. Wesley gave him, and on St. Thomas's Day⁵ married they were at Epworth, by Mr. [Matthew] Horbery; full sore against my will, but my consent was never asked, and your father, brother [Samuel] Wesley, etc., being for the match. I said nothing against it to them, only laboured what I could to dissuade Molly from it. But the flesh and the devil were too hard for me. I could not prevail. Yet with God nothing is impossible, and though this unequal marriage has to me a terrible aspect, tis possible for God to bring good out of this great evil; or otherwise he can take me away from the evil to come.

Still, Jacky, I have somewhat more to tell you, but dare not write it, only this. Pray let Robinson (your pupil) know that Whitelamb is married. Let him know I was against the match. Give my service to him; and tell him from me, I am as good as my word, I daily pray for him, and beg of him, if he have the least regard for his soul, or have yet any remaining sense of religion in his mind, to shake off all acquaintance with the profane and irregular. For it is the free thinker and sensualist, not the despised Methodists, which will be ashamed and confounded when summoned to appear before the face of that Almighty Judge whose Godhead they have blasphemed, and whose offered mercy they have despised and ludicrously rejected. The pleasures of sin are but for a short, uncertain time, but eternity hath no end. Therefore one would think that few arguments might serve to convince a man which has not lost his senses that tis of the last importance for us to be very serious in improving the present time, and

¹Replying to JW's of Dec. 19, which is not known to survive.

²Apparently the village on the river Thames, 2 miles NNW of Oxford.

³I.e., Mary Wesley.

⁴Matthew Robinson (1713–45), of Blyborough, Lincolnshire, who matriculated Lincoln College in Oct. 1730 and was a student of JW. He would receive his BA in 1734 and his MA from Brasnose College in 1737. He died young in 1745.

⁵Dec. 21, 1733.

acquainting ourselves with God while it is called 'today'⁶; lest being disqualified for his blissful presence our future existence be inexpressibly miserable.

You are entirely in the right in what you say in the second paragraph of your letter. The different degrees of virtue and piety are different states of soul, which must be passed through gradually; and he that cavils at a practical advice plainly shows that he has not gone through those states which were to have been passed before he could apprehend the goodness of the given direction. For in all matters of religion, if there be not an internal sense in the hearer corresponding to that sense in the mind of the speaker, what is said will have no effect. This I have often experienced. Yet sometimes it falls out that while a zealous Christian is discoursing on spiritual subjects the blessed Spirit of God Incarnate will give such light to the minds of those that hear him as shall dispel their native darkness, and enable them to apprehend those spiritual things of which before they had no discernment. As in the case of St. Peter, who preaching the gospel to Cornelius and his friends, it is said, 'While Peter yet spake these words the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.'⁷

Mr. [William] Law is a good and a valuable man. Yet he is but a man, and therefore no marvel that he could not be so explicit as you could have wished in speaking of the presence of God.⁸ Perhaps his mind was too full of the sense of that blessed being readily to hit upon words to express a thing so far above their nature. Who can think, much less speak, on that vast subject—his greatness, his dignity, astonishes us! The purity of his goodness, his redeeming love, confounds and overwhelms us! At the perception of his glory our feeble powers are suspended, and nature faints before the God of nature.

For my part, after many years' search and inquiry, I still continue to pay my devotions to an unknown God. I cannot know him. I dare not say I love him—only this, I have chose him for my only happiness, my all, my only God—in a word, for my God. And when I sound my will, I feel it adheres to its choice, though not so faithfully as it ought. Therefore I desire your prayers, which I need much more than you do mine.

That God is everywhere present, and we always present to him, is certain; but that he should be always present to us is scarce consistent with our mortal state. Some choice souls, tis true, have attained such a habitual sense of his presence as admits of few interruptions. But what my dear? Consider, he is so infinitely blessed! So altogether lovely! That every perception of him, every approach (in contemplation) to his supreme glory and blessedness imparts such a vital joy and gladness to the heart as banishes all pain and sense of misery. And were eternity added to this happiness it would be heaven.

I have much to say, but time is expired. Pray burn this letter, for I would not that any know my thoughts of W[hitelamb] and M[ary], since they are married. She thinks she can reform what is amiss in him. I think myself he grows more serious and regular. My love and blessing to ye both. Wishing ye a happy New Year. My service to Mr. [Westley] Hall.

Address: 'To / the Revd Mr Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon / By way of London'.

Postmark: '4/IA'. *Charges:* ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Jan. 1, 1733/4 my m[other]'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 2/11.⁹

⁶Cf. Heb. 3:13.

⁷Acts 10:44.

⁸JW had visited with William Law on Nov. 28, 1733, and had apparently commented on his disappointment about their discussion in his letter to his mother.

⁹Transcription published in *Works*, 25:362–64; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 160–62.

From Kezia Wesley

Epworth
January 18, 1734

Dear Brother,

I am not surprised your affection should be cooler towards me than formerly. 'Tis next to a miracle it lasted so long, since nothing but the good qualities of the person beloved can be a foundation for a love of judgment and discretion. This indifference, therefore, proceeds from the unwise choice you made of a friend.

Among unequals, what society can sort,
what harmony, or true delight?¹

Sister Molly was married the 21st of December. There were no preparations for the wedding, we have not the common lot of mankind. 'The voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.'² In so much as the first day, our rejoicing is always turned into mourning, because we cannot meet with an honest man! You had no reason to be displeas'd at my telling sister Patty of Mr. Whitelamb's affair.³ Certainly I was under no obligation to secrecy, when he spoke of it himself to me and all the family, M[r.] H[all], M[atthew] R[obinson], etc.—and not only spoke, but boasted of it as a laudable action! I used all the little rhetoric I was mistress of to dissuade her from marrying, but it was all in vain. So I advis'd her (if she would marry) to do it as soon as possible, for I perceiv'd his affection grew cooler to sister Molly every day. But sure you had acted more like a friend to me if you had told me he was an immoral man, not only in this instance, for in this he is only like his neighbours, 'They cannot love where they are beloved.' But he has very little sense of religion according to our notions. I thought he had been a friend to the family, and an honest man in the main (but he proves neither), for which reason I trust'd him farther than I should have done if I had known him. For 'he that fears no God can love no friend'.⁴ I desire you will let Betty know immediately he is married, which will prevent their keeping a correspondence [that] I am afraid neither his love to my sister nor his religion will keep him from, if she has not the prudence to decline it. I do not tell you this to expose the man, but because I believe you may do him good by writing, if he be not entirely given over to a reprobate mind.

I think I did not tell you I had resolv'd not to converse in private with the man you spok'e of, for I was afraid it was not in my own power whether I would or no. If he be the destroyer of my peace, 'twas not design'dly, and you know 'tis the intention makes an action good or bad. I am very sorry he should suffer any thing detrimental to his character upon my account, because he has been very civil to me. Besides he is the only man I ever met with (except relations) worthy to be a companion, a guide, and a friend. I own myself exceedingly oblig'd to you for telling me of my faults. I am sensible that I am vainer and less sincere than formally. But I would not have it imputed to converse with him, but to the weakness of my own mind.

¹Milton, *Paradise Lost*, viii.383.

²Jer. 7:34; or more positively, Jer. 33:11.

³His infatuation with Betty of Medley, detailed in Susanna (Annesley) Wesley's letter to JW of Jan. 1, 1734.

⁴Torquato Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or the Recovery of Jerusalem*, translated in verse by Edward Fairfax (London: J. Jaggard & M. Lownes, 1600), Bk. IV, st. 65, line 5.

The outward act is prompted from within
And from the sinner's mind proceeds the sin.⁵

But granting your supposition, that my being acquainted with him will shorten my life, which is the worst consequence can follow. If I may be allowed to speak freely, really I am of Plato's opinion, that the continuation of soul and body together, upon no consideration ought rather to be chosen than the separation and dissolution of them. If it will be any satisfaction for you to know that the snare is broken (as you call it) then be satisfied it is.

But you would be more my friend if you desired we should continue our correspondence, since you know neither my mind or body is of a constitution to bear a disappointment of any kind without great disturbance. I shall be very glad to hear from you, as soon as you can spare an hour from better employments, and to know your thoughts of prayer, meditation, or any other useful subject. 'Tis certainly a motive to invincible courage and resolution, in bearing the evils we meet with in this world, to consider there is such a state before us in which we shall be out of the reach of all, and enjoy an everlasting undisturbed repose.

I am, dear brother,
Your sincere friend till death,

Kezia Wesley

Pray send me word immediately M[r.] W[hitelamb]'s doxy⁶ is disposed of. I think Mr. [Matthew] Robinson seems to be worthy of her. You shall marry her to him.

Love to brother Charles; it is more than he deserves.

Address: 'To / Mr John Wesley, Fellow / of Lincoln College / Oxon.'

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] K[ezia] Jan. 18. 1733' (in left margin of first page).

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 13/4.

⁵Cf. Matthew Prior, 'Henry and Emma', lines 481–82.

⁶Concubine.

From Richard Morgan Sr.¹

[Dublin]
[January 31, 1734]

Reverend Sir,

I am favoured with yours of the 15th, and am very sorry that my last letter has been the occasion of any disquietude to you, which I am sure I never designed. When out of the friendship that had been contracted between us, and the good opinion I had both of your and your brother's sincerity and judgment, I determined chiefly on your advice to send my son to the university, I did not imagine that it would be expected he should join in that strict society which it was known I disliked in my other son. Upon this confidence, you know I did not offer the least caution against it in my former letters, nor did you in your first letter give any intimation that you expected it, having only expostulated on both sides on the subject of his learning. And thus, preliminaries being, as I thought, happily fixed, I was easy. But afterwards I was greatly surprised and alarmed to find you insist in your letter of the 6th of November² that he must keep company with those, and only those, whom you approve of, with other hints tending that way. Then indeed the melancholy end of my other son, and the hazard of my only son being led the same way, made deep impressions on me, and my friends observed me melancholy upon it for some time, my fears and trouble increasing when I saw a letter from Mr. Battely³ of Christ Church complaining that he had twice invited my son to his chambers, but that he did not come. Then I concluded from the expressions in your letter that he was to be confined to the company of the gentlemen of that society. Yet under all these apprehensions and uneasiness I forebore in my letter to you to make any reflections upon the words of your letter, but urged only, from the tragical experience in my other son, the danger I apprehended of young people's engaging in the same way, and I thought that the dismal account I gave of my poor son (which nothing but my fears about my other son would have made me mention) would rather have met with pity to me than reproaches.

Now I must tell you that I respect and adore both you and every gentleman of that strict religious society that you are engaged in, and doubt not but you will meet with an exalted seat in heaven. I could even wish to be among you, as I formerly hinted to you. Yet I must be of the same opinion still, that it is a dangerous experiment for young people to venture upon, which I think the example I gave you in my last sufficiently proves; and if it were necessary I could give you several other examples how too great a zeal for piety and religion has carried injudicious people into madness. But supposing [it] to be a doubtful case whether it be advisable for a youth to unite in this society or not (as sure it must at least be allowed to be, from the diversity of opinions about it), how must I determine the question? You argue very rationally and piously for it, and five able divines, some of them bishops, men of remarkable learning and piety, of my intimate acquaintance, warn me of the danger of it; then surely from the common rules of prudence and judgment it is plain how I ought to determine.

I agree with you in one thing, that from my son's gaiety, and inclination to pleasures (I cannot say more than, [they] were innocent), I had the less reason to fear his falling into too strict a course of life. And this I observed to a certain divine, in discoursing with him on that subject, when he heard that you were to be his tutor. But he answered that the danger was the greater, that if such a volatile temper should take a turn that way, he might plunge into deeper extremes than graver persons, and that I did not know what the influence of a tutor might bring to pass. God grant that he does and will continue to do what he has told you—viz., constantly say his prayers at home and in the chapel—and then I will venture to say (though I am no divine), if he also avoids sins of commission, that he may be ranked in the class of good

¹Replying to JW's letter of Jan. 15 (*Works*, 25:367–71).

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Likely Oliver Battely (1697–1762), who was a proctor at Christ Church; but possibly Samuel Battely (b. c. 1716), who had matriculated at Christ Church in Dec. 1733.

Christians. It is neither my province, nor am I any way equal to you, to manage this point of controversy, therefore I beg we may drop it for the future.

If I have said anything in this or my former letter that is disagreeable to you (for I assure you I would do nothing willingly to disoblige you), I hope you will forgive me, and impute it to my too great anxiety for the welfare of my son, and believe that there is nothing I covet more than his living a good life, and doing his duty both to God and man, which I think is generally the wish of even a wicked parent. And as I am not notoriously so, I hope I am not to be suspected as encouraging my son to depart from the right way.

The enclosed letter, which I have left open for your perusal, shows you how desirous I am that he should obediently submit to your authority and government, etc.⁴ I would never have sent him to the university trusting to the common care of a tutor, after the long habit he had of pleasure and idleness. My dependence on yours or your brother's more than ordinary care of him made me venture upon it, and I hope nothing has happened to create any indifference in you towards him.

The former part of your letter I am come now to answer in the last place, and do assure you that I never received the letter you mention, of which you saw the rough draft upon his table, nor anything like it. His last letter that I received was of the 6th of November, and in that, and in every letter that he made any mention of you in, he did it with great respect to you, and expressions of your civilities and kindness to him.

I now conclude with all fervent wishes and desire for his and all our happiness in this and the next world, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate, most obliged, humble, servant,

Richard Morgan

Source: manuscript transcription; Morgan MSS, 70–74; paragraphing added.⁵

⁴Pp. 75–76 of the Morgan MSS contain CW's transcription: 'Part of Mr. Morgan's letter to his son, enclosed in the above letter.'

Jan. 31, 1733/4

What, Dick, did you so soon forget our stipulations and conditions on your going to the university as to carry a greyhound with you to Oxford, and to attempt keeping him in your college, contrary to the rules of it? Did not you promise to stick to your studies, and be as subservient to your tutor as if you were a servitor? ... I vowed to you before, and now I vow again, that if you follow an idle, vicious, or extravagant life, you shall never inherit my fortune. ... You are now in the hands of a gentleman (it is my happiness, and so you may reckon it, too) that has more honour and conscience than to conceal your faults from me. Your duty to God is always in the first place to be duly attended. Go to bed by times; rise early. Omit no one college duty. Squander not away the morning in tea and chat. Never be seen out of your chamber in studying hours. For the rest I refer to your good tutor, who I am sure will not be wanting in his instructions to you, without engaging you in that society, which I am not for. Banish your dog immediately. *Quid de quoque viro, et cui dicas saepe caveto.* [Horace, *Epistles*, I.xviii.68, last word being 'videto' in the original—'Beware what you say about anyone, and to whom you say it.'] Always imagine what you do will be known.

⁵Transcription published in *Works*, 25:374–76.

From William Smith

Perpool Lane, London
February 6, 1733/4

My Dearest Friend,

It was waiting for Mr. Greives¹ coming made me not answer yours sooner.² If, when I come, I do not give you a sufficient reason for my being so long absent from college, never trust me more. But yet alas, how lukewarm is piety with me at the best, and fasting neglected, which I never looked for! Not entirely dropped, I hope, but for a week or two, to be taken up and practised again incessantly. To which purpose, believe me my friend, 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee'.³ Notwithstanding I cannot be present in body sooner than a month's time, being I am learning shorthand, which will take up a full fortnight of it. You knew, I presume, I was obliged to see my father before my return. And therefore we would get you to ask leave of absence, and entreat Mr. Farrer⁴ for so much longer.

I beg my humble service to him, and all friends; and accept the same yourself from, my dearest friend,

Your most obliged friend and servant,

William Smith

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr. Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxford'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Feb. 6. 1733/4 / Smith / Prof[ession] of fir[ien]dship'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/116.⁵

¹Thomas Greives (b. 1711) of Norham, was one of JW's students, who matriculated at Lincoln College in Oct. 1730, received his BA in 1734, and was ordained in Sept. 1735 by the Bishop of Oxford.

²JW's diary records a letter to Smith on Jan. 23; the letter is not known to survive.

³Ps. 42:1.

⁴Abraham Farrer (b. 1710) had received his BA from Balliol College in 1730, his MA from Lincoln College in 1732, and was currently a fellow of Lincoln.

⁵Transcription published in Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 26–27 n.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.¹

[Westminster]
February 7, 1734

Dear Jack,

To the best of my memory your character was but little in my thoughts, and my own not at all, in my late letters. I never designed to justify myself. Perhaps my laughter is particularly blameable, as my temper is serious, severe, and melancholy.

I have nothing to say against especial seasons or occasions of sorrow. Duty apart, I think him as ridiculous who weeps not at a tragedy as he who does not laugh at a comedy.

Your general arguments stand thus: God is present. All things are serious. Eternity is near (nearer every moment). If I understand the terms, they conclude against *all* laughter. If one contradictory true proves the other false—who can keep off the consequence? Not heaven omnipotent.

Thus ends our notable dispute, or rather we have had none at all. For by your simile of a cordial, and your profession, you are only against excessive laughter, which I was never for; and only for seriousness, which I was never against. There is a time to weep and a time to laugh. And now methinks each of us may say to the other, as Dick does to Matt:

That people lived and died I knew
An hour ago, as well as you.²

I have had two letters from Charles.³ The first truly, and on more accounts than one, unanswerable. To the last I say he might have been sure my father would have sent for Dick Smith⁴ immediately, if he had designed to have had him at all. That matter is all over. I did what I could in writing— so *transeat cum ceteris*.⁵ Though I must stare, if I don't laugh.

We (i.e. father and wife and I) join in love to you and him. Love to Dick [Smith] too. I am glad he is good. I am, dear John,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

S. Wesley

Address: 'To the Revd. Mr / Wesley Fellow of / Lincoln / Oxon'.

Postmarks: '7/[FE]' and 'WM'. *Charge:* '7'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Feb. 7. 1734 b Sam'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 5/10.⁶

¹Answering JW's of Jan. 29, which is not known to survive.

²Cf. Matthew Prior, 'Alma', Canto III, lines 580–81 (using 'live' and 'die'); Matt and Dick are characters in the poem.

³Neither of these letters appear to survive.

⁴Orig., 'Smyth'; Richard Smith (b. 1714) matriculated at Christ Church in Oct. 1732, and CW became his tutor. JW and CW seem to have been trying to arrange for Smith to serve as a curate for Samuel Sr.

⁵'this will pass on like all others'.

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 25:376.

From Emilia Wesley

[Gainsborough]
February 7, 1733[4]

Dear Brother,

You doubtless have long expected a letter from me.¹ But to tell you the plain truth, in your last you sent me a lesson to learn so hard and full of difficulty that it has puzzled me almost ever since—at least, till within this last fortnight. Such a thing as I scarcely knew how to put in practice. Again, it seemed mighty convenient to break off the correspondence sooner or later; and what time so proper as the present? Thus wavering and uncertain I remained, one week conversing, another refusing to speak or to see him. Till the week before last, when chance furnished me with sufficient matter to turn the scale, which you before had brought to an equality.

You must understand his Whiggish principles were always more provoking to me than his being a Quaker. One morning I chanced to say at breakfast that my father was gone to Oxford. Immediately he fell foul on that university, and complimented them with several titles which I thought their enemies had more right to. We then got to Lord Clarendon and the family of the Stuarts—he decrying them; and I, with more warmth, vindicating them. The dispute lasted hot about two hours and we parted with mutual resentment, I believe. At least, I was thoroughly provoked at him for daring to contradict me so violently, it being, you know, my avowed doctrine that an unmarried woman can never be in the wrong in any conversation with a bachelor.

Well, this provoked me, and soon after his back was up ten times worse than mine—the occasion as follows. We have here, boarding with me, one Robinson, a young saddler from London, who seems to like home better than being abroad. As the doctor is naturally the most suspicious fool breathing, he seldom comes into the house without first watching the window, and I fancy one evening he saw him leaning on my chair and talking to me. For the next morning he began a long grave harangue on the inconstancy of womankind. And what was worse, he affirmed that our sex were so fond of variety that no woman could or would be contented with the address and company of one man. I perceived where the shoe pinched, and answered as gravely that no man had reason to complain of a woman keeping another company except he himself had plainly offered her marriage and she had entertained him afterwards; and added that none but a fool would complain of being jilted by a woman never courted in express terms. So, scorning to vindicate my conduct, I left him to his meditations, and never have been with him in private and very little in public since. Nor do I design to ever show the least regard more, above common civility. So farewell George Fox and all thy tribe, for Rockwood, and Ringwood, and Jowler, and Tray!²

Indeed, had I parted with him purely out of religion it might have been better, and now if he ever gets opportunity for an explanation perhaps my resolves may stagger—for why, brother, should we part? Cannot a religious man go to heaven unless he thinks like you and I? The prejudices of education are very great in us all. Had my parents been Quakers, or his Church-folk, doubtless we never had differed; for sure no two in England ever had more the same manner, both of thinking and judging, than we, except where education makes the difference. And now what can I say on the whole, but only make the old common observation of the great uncertainty and trouble of human life? When I loved [Robert] Leybourne, he loved not me; though he was rogue enough to persuade me he did. Well, so much for that! Now when, after a variety of ill-fortune, I seemed settled here with an excellent physician to make up the

¹JW's last previous letter to Emilia recorded in his diary was on Oct. 8, 1733. Neither this letter nor any other possible letters prior to this response from Emilia are known to survive.

²The names of hunting dogs in a popular hunting song of the time—so Emilia is turning her back on the Quaker doctor and going hunting again.

loss of Dr. [Edward] Greathead,³ with a companion and friend to whom I could speak freely at all times (and, must I add too, the most passionate lover?), what ails my fortune now? Why he is a Quaker, and my own brother, for whom I have the tenderest regard, he whom I never wilfully disobeyed or grieved, presses it on me as a strict duty to part for ever with this faithful friend, this delightful companion. And I have done it, tis true; but now what is there left in life worth valuing? Truly not much, and if I should comply with my mother's earnest desire—throw up my business here and go home—I do not see there would be much in it, since my Creator seems to have decreed me to a state of suffering here, and always deprives me of what I love, or embitters it to me. Who can contend with Omnipotence? No, I will strive no more. No more labour to make myself what they call easy in the world, since tis all striving against the stream, labour in vain, and in the strictest sense not only vanity but vexation of spirit. I beg you will burn this, as you did the last, and write soon to, dear brother,

Your affectionate sister,

Emilia Wesley

My love to Charles. I have much to say to brother [John] Whitelamb, and Kez[ia], and Halbury.⁴

Address portion is missing.

Endorsement: by JW, ' S[ister] Em Feb. 7. 1733[4] / Adieu to Dr. Hu.' (in left margin of page two).

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 6/7.⁵

³Emilia 'lost' Greathead as her regular physician when she moved from Lincoln to Gainsborough in 1732.

⁴She almost certainly means Matthew Horbery; and is referring to the controversy surrounding Whitelamb's marriage to her sister Mary.

⁵Transcription published in Stevenson, *Memorials*, 269–70 (dating as 1733).

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

[Epworth]
February 14 [1734¹]

Dear Son,

I cannot well say whether it will answer any good end to let the young gentleman know that you have heard of what he has said against you. I doubt it will make him desperate. I remember a piece of advice which my brother Matthew² gave in a parallel case: 'Never let any man know that you have heard what he has said against you. It may be he spake upon some misinformation, or was in a passion, or did it in a weak compliance with the company; perhaps he has changed his mind, and is sorry for having done it, and may continue friendly to you. But if he finds you are acquainted with what he said, he will conclude you cannot forgive him, and upon that supposition will become your enemy.'

Your other question is indeed of great weight, and the resolving it requires a better judgment than mine. But since you desire my opinion, I shall propose what I have to say.

Since God is altogether inaccessible to us but by Jesus Christ, and since none ever was or ever will be saved but by him, is it not absolutely necessary for all people, young and old, to be well grounded in the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ? By faith I do not mean an assent only to the truths of the gospel concerning him, but such an assent as influences our practice, as makes us heartily and thankfully accept him for our God and Saviour, upon his own conditions. No faith below this can be saving. And since this faith is necessary to salvation, can it be too frequently or too explicitly discoursed on to young people? I think not.

But since the natural pride of man is wont to suggest to him that he is self-sufficient, and has no need of a Saviour, may it not be proper to show (the young especially) that without the great atonement there could be no remission of sin; and that in the present state of human nature no man can qualify himself for heaven without that Holy Spirit which is given by God Incarnate? To convince them of this truth, might it not be needful to inform them that since God is infinitely just, or rather that he is justice itself, it necessarily follows that vindictive justice is an essential property in the divine nature? And if so, one of these two things seems to have been absolutely necessary, either that there must be an adequate satisfaction made to the divine justice for the violation of God's law by mankind; or else that the whole human species should have perished in Adam (which would have afforded too great matter of triumph to the apostate angels)—otherwise how could God have been just to himself? Would not some mention of the necessity of revealed religion be proper here? Since without it all the wit of man could never have found out how human nature was corrupted in its fountain, neither had it been possible for us to have discovered any way or means whereby it might be restored to its primitive purity. Nay, had it been possible for the brightest angels in heaven to have found out such a way to redeem and restore mankind as God hath appointed, yet durst any of them have proposed it to the uncreated Godhead? No. Surely the offended must appoint a way to save the offender, or man must be lost for ever. 'O the depth of the riches of the wisdom, and knowledge, and goodness of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts higher than our thoughts, and his ways than our ways!'³

Here surely you may give free scope to your spirits, here you may freely use your Christian liberty, and discourse without reserve of the excellency of the knowledge and love of Christ, as his Spirit gives you utterance. What, my son, did the pure and holy person of the Son of God pass by the fallen

¹This letter is clearly a reply to part of JW's letter of Jan. 28, 1734 (*Works*, 25:371–73), the reference being to Richard Morgan Jr., and JW's problem in dealing with him.

²Susanna almost certainly means her brother-in-law, Matthew Wesley; her brother Matthew Annesley appears to have died young.

³Rom. 11:33–34.

angels, who were far superior, of greater dignity, and of an higher order in the scale of existence, and choose to unite himself to the human nature; and shall we soften (as you call it) these glorious truths? Rather let us speak boldly, without fear; these truths ought to be frequently inculcated, and pressed home upon the consciences of men. And when once men are affected with a sense of redeeming love, that sense will powerfully convince them of the vanity of the world, and make them esteem the honour, wealth, and pleasures of it as dross, or dung, so that they may win Christ.

As for moral subjects, they are necessary to be discoursed on; but then, I humbly conceive, we are to speak of moral virtues as Christians, and not like heathens. And if we could indeed do honour to our Saviour, we should take all fitting occasions to make men observe the excellence and perfection of the moral virtues taught by Christ and his apostles, far surpassing all that was pretended to by the very best of the heathen philosophers. All their morality was defective in principle and direction, was intended only to regulate the outward actions, but never reached the heart, or at the highest it looked no farther than the temporal happiness of mankind. 'But moral virtues evangelized, or improved into Christian duties, have partly a view to promote the good of human society here, but chiefly to qualify the observers of them for a much more blessed and more enduring society hereafter.'⁴ I cannot stay to enlarge on this vast subject, nor indeed (considering whom I write to) is it needful. Yet one thing I cannot forbear adding, which may carry some weight with his admirers, and that is, the very wise and just reply which Mr. [John] Locke made to one that desired him to draw up a system of morals. 'Did the world', says he, 'want a rule, I confess there could be no work so necessary, nor so commendable. But the gospel contains so perfect a body of ethics that reason may be excused from that enquiry, since she may find man's duty clearer and easier in revelation than in herself.'⁵

That you may continue steadfast in the faith, and increase more and more in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ; that holiness, simplicity, and purity (which are different words signifying the same thing) may recommend you to the favour of God Incarnate; that his Spirit may dwell in you, and keep you still (as now) under a sense of God's blissful presence; is the hearty prayer of, dear son,

Your affectionate mother, and most faithful friend,

S[usanna] W[esley]

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 81–84, misdated 'Feb. 14, 1735'.⁶

⁴Daniel Waterland, *The Nature, Obligation, and Efficacy of the Christian Sacraments Considered; ... as also, The Comparative Value of Moral and Positive Duties Distinctly Stated and Cleared* (London: John Crownfield, 1730), 25.

⁵John Locke, *Some Familiar Letters between Mr. Locke, and several of his Friends* (London: Churchill, 1708), 144.

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 25:377–78; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 162–64.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley¹

[Epworth]
Saturday, March 30, 1734

Dear Son,

The young gentleman's father,² for aught I can perceive, has a better notion of religion than many people have, though not the best. For few insist upon the necessity of private prayer, but if they go to church sometimes, and abstain from the grossest acts of mortal sin, though they are ignorant of the spirit and power of godliness, and have no sense of the love of God and universal benevolence, yet they rest well satisfied of their salvation, and are pleased to think they may enjoy the world as much as they can while they live, and have heaven in reserve when they die. I have met with abundance of these people in my time, and I think it one of the most difficult things imaginable to bring them off from their carnal security, and to convince them that heaven is a state, as well as a place; a state of holiness, begun in this life, though not perfected till we enter upon life eternal; that all sins are so many spiritual diseases, which must be cured by the power of Christ before we can be capable of being happy, even though it were possible for us to be admitted into the kingdom of heaven hereafter. If the young man's father was well apprized of this he would not venture to pronounce his son a good Christian upon such weak grounds as he seems to do. Yet notwithstanding the father's indifference, I can't but conceive good hopes of the son, because he chooses to spend so much of his time with you (for I presume he is not forced to it), and if we may not from thence conclude he is good, I think we may believe he desires to be so. And if that be the case, give him time. We know that the great work of regeneration is not performed at once, but proceeds by slow and often imperceptible degrees, by reason of the strong opposition which corrupt nature makes against it; yet if one grain of divine grace be sown in the heart, though (to use our blessed Lord's simile) it be but as a single grain of mustard seed, it will take root, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Mr. [John] Clayton and Mr. [Westley] Hall are much wiser than I am, yet with submission to their better judgments I think that though some marks of a visible superiority on your part is convenient to maintain the order of the world, yet severity is not; since experience may convince us that such kind of behaviour towards a man (children are out of the question) may make him a hypocrite, but will never make him a convert. Never trouble yourself to inquire whether he loves you or not. If you can persuade him to love God, he will love you as much as is necessary; if he love not God his love is of no value. But be that as it will, we must refer all things to God, and be as indifferent as we possibly can be in all matters wherein the great enemy, self, is concerned.

If you and your few pious companions have devoted two hours in the evenings to religious reading or conference, there can be no dispute but that you ought to spend the whole time in such exercises which it was set apart for. But if your evenings be not strictly devoted, I see no harm in talking sometimes of your secular affairs. But if (as you say) it does your novice no good, and does yourselves harm, the case is plain—you must not prejudice your own souls to do another good; much less ought you to do so when you can do no good at all. Of this ye are better judges than I can be.

Twas well you paid not for a double letter. I am always afraid of putting you to charge, and that fear prevented me sending you a long scribble indeed a while ago. For a certain person and I had a warm debate on some important points in religion wherein we could not agree.³ Afterwards he wrote some propositions, which I endeavoured to answer, and this controversy I was minded to have sent you, and to have desired your judgment upon it. But the unreasonable cost of such a letter then hindered me from sending it. Since I have heard him in two sermons contradict every article he before defended, which makes me hope that upon second thoughts his mind is changed; and if so, what was said in private

¹This appears to be a response to JW's letter of Mar. 1, which is not known to survive.

²Richard Morgan Sr.; see his letter of Jan. 31, 1734, to JW.

³Possibly Samuel Wesley Sr.; or John Whitelamb, who had recently become his curate.

conference ought not to be remembered, and therefore I would not send you the papers at all.

I can't think Mr. Hall does well in refusing an opportunity of doing so much service to religion as he certainly might do if he accepted the living he is about to refuse. Surely never was more need of orthodox, sober divines in our Lord's vineyard than there is now; and why a man of his extraordinary piety and love to souls should decline the service in this critical juncture I can't conceive. But this is none of my business.

You want no direction from me how to employ your time. I thank God for his inspiring you with a resolution of being faithful in improving that important talent committed to your trust. It would be of no service to you to know in any particular what I do, or what method in examination, or anything else, I observe. I am superannuated, and don't now live as I would, but as I can. I can't observe order, or think consistently, as formerly. When I have a lucid interval I aim at improving it, but alas! it is but aiming.

I see nothing in the disposition of your time but what I approve, unless it be that you do not assign enough of it to meditation, which is (I conceive) incomparably the best means to spiritualize our affections, confirm our judgments, and add strength to our pious resolutions of any exercise whatever. If contrition be as tis commonly defined, that sorrow for and hatred of sin which proceeds from our love to God, surely the best way to excite this contrition is to meditate frequently on such subjects as may excite, cherish, and increase our love to that blest Being! And what is so proper for this end as deep and serious consideration of that pure, unaccountable love which is demonstrated to us in our redemption by God Incarnate! Verily, the simplicity of divine love is wonderful! It transcends all thought, it passeth our sublimest apprehensions! Perfect love indeed! No mixture of interest! No by-ends or selfish regards. If we be righteous, what give we him? In him we live, and move, and have our being,⁴ both in a physical and moral sense. But he can gain nothing by us, nor can we offer him anything that is not already his own. He can lose nothing by losing us, but in our loss of him we lose all good, all happiness, all peace, all pleasure, health, and joy; all that is either good in itself, or can be good for us. And yet this great, this incomprehensible, ineffable, all-glorious God deigns to regard us! Declares he loves us! Expresses the tenderest concern for our happiness! Is unwilling to give us up to the grand enemy of souls, or to leave us to ourselves, but hath commissioned his ambassadors to offer us pardon and salvation upon the most equitable terms imaginable! How long doth he wait to be gracious! How oft doth he call upon us to return and live! By his ministers, his providences; by the still, small voice of his Holy Spirit! By conscience, his vice-gerent within us, and by his merciful corrections, and the innumerable blessings we daily enjoy! To contemplate God as he is in himself we cannot; if we aim at doing it we feel nature faints under the least perception of his greatness, and we are presently swallowed up, and lost in the immensity of his glory! For finite, in presence of Infinite, vanishes straight into nothing. But when we consider him under the character of a Saviour we revive, and the greatness of that majesty which before astonished and confounded our weak faculties now enhances the value of his condescension towards us, and melts our tempers into tenderness and love.

But I am got to the end of my paper before I am aware. One word more and I am done. As your course of life is austere, and your diet low, so the passions, as far as they depend on the body, will be low, too. Therefore you must not judge of your interior state by your not feeling great fervours of spirit and extraordinary agitations, as plentiful weeping, etc., but rather by the firm adherence of your will to God. If upon examination you perceive that you still choose him for your only good, that your spirit (to use a Scripture phrase) cleaveth steadfastly to him,⁵ follow Mr. Baxter's advice, and you will be easy:

Put your souls, with all their sins and dangers, and all their interests, into the hand of Jesus Christ your Saviour; and trust them wholly with him by a resolved faith. It is he that hath purchased them, and therefore loveth them. It is he that is the owner of them by right of redemption. And it is now become his own interest, even for the success and honour of his redemption, to save

⁴Cf. Acts 17:28.

⁵Ps. 78:9 (BCP).

them.⁶

When I begin to write to you I think I don't know how to make an end. I fully purposed when I began to write to be very brief, but I will conclude, though I find I shall be forced to make up such a clumsy letter as I did last time.⁷

Today J[ohn] Brown senior sets forward for London in order to attend your father home.

Pray give my love and blessing to Charles. I hope he is well, though I have never heard from him since he left Epworth.

Dear Jacky, God Almighty bless thee!

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 2/12.⁸

⁶Richard Baxter, *The Poor Man's Family Book*, 2nd edn. (London: Neville Simmons, 1675), 385–86.

⁷Apparently a letter (not extant) which similarly occupied almost all of the four pages, so that she may have used a makeshift cover or label for the address.

⁸Transcription published in *Works*, 25:382–85; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 164–67.

From Prideaux Selby¹

London
April 9, 1734

Reverend Sir,

Though the apostle's advice is certainly very good, to be careful for nothing,² not to be solicitous about our reputation nor any other temporal blessing, yet as I labour under an ill fame and no honest man will countenance or ordain me without a character, I make bold to endeavour to clear myself by solemnly declaring the truth to you.

While I was at the university, God, who did not cut me off in the midst of mine iniquity, was so merciful as to let me see the necessity of regeneration by the shedding abroad his love in my heart and a peace that passeth all understanding. Then I wrote to my dear parents concerning their eternal welfare. But fearing lest they might go out of the world before I saw them, I desired leave to go into the country, where I was concerned for the never-ending woe and misery of my relations and neighbours. I could pray for them, but could not think I was in earnest when I only said 'Lord, Lord' and did not use other means. So considering many of our clergymen seemed to persuade those under their care by their way of living they might go to heaven without working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and how much church wardens neglect their duty, and as the bishop (who I heard was a good man) lived at a great distance from them, and at a much greater one season of the year, I ventured to write the letter on the other side, hoping it would have some good effect one way or other.

I did not advise with anybody, for I knew if I did but give the least hint of it, it would certainly be stopped. Nor did I speak to the persons mentioned concerning the matter, for I thought there was no possibility that anything I could suggest would have effect. And I was soon to leave them, and no duty is a duty at all times, perhaps that was none either. And now, though what I have done is a very odd out-of-the-way thing, yet I am far from blaming myself. I rather think I have reason to give glory to God who enabled me to do so. I am sure it was contrary to flesh and blood, and I have met with cold looks and broken friendships for it. But my comfort is there is one that judgeth right, that takes care of sparrows, and I hope will make our honesty buoy up at last one way or other. The world may think (and some have been pleased to say) I was out of my wits, but perhaps there are more miserably mad in it than the many are willing to believe. God be thanked, its dishonour does not move me much. It will not be long before I hope I shall get above it. I wish I could set my face as a flint to all its shame. And that I may do so, and grow from strength to strength with all humility, I beg your prayers, who am, reverend sir,

Your obliged friend,

Prideaux Selby

If you please, sir, give my duty to my tutor, and thanks for his wise conduct in refusing me a *bene decessit*.³

¹Son of George Selby, merchant, of Holy Island, Northumberland, Prideaux (b. 1712) matriculated Lincoln College Nov. 25, 1731.

²Phil. 4:6.

³A certification of good standing, for transfer.

[copy of letter to his bishop on back side]

May it please your Lordship,

It is no small grief to me to view the misery of my poor brethren in this country. Almost all of them are going on in the broad way to everlasting torments, lost sheep of the house of Israel. For Christ's sake send aid unto them. Here the blind lead the blind, scarce a minister of the gospel among us that live better than an honest heathen. Yesterday I heard the Rev. Mr. A. swear. Mr. B. S—n talks b[lasphemy] and gets drunk frequently. Mr. C. is a d—n of priest. Mr. D. and Mr. E. are called d—n priests. Mr. E. pays nobody his debts. My lord, I would not have you entirely depend upon what I say, but make enquiry whether these things be so or no, and then I am sure one of your lordship's character will have compassion on the perishing multitudes wandering out of the way, like sheep having no shepherd.

Whatever the world may think this information proceeds from (which it is to be lamented, has too much malevolence to deal impartially with me and judge righteous judgement) I am resolved not to be ashamed of my crucified Saviour in this [matter]. And if I am not so strong as to rejoice in it, by God's assistance [I] dare to bear the reproach of being called an informer. It is not malice, my lord, but pity to them and those under their care. I had rather see such men common hang-men or begging their bread than now keeping up to themselves destruction against the day of wrath. O my lord, I have too much reason to be afraid they will one day wish a thousand times they had never been born when in that place of torment where worm, etc. Most certainly they are the greatest object of every thinking man's pity, and stand most in need of every good man's prayers. And that your lordship may pray as well as use other means that Christ's kingdom may come among them, and all men may see the things that belong to their everlasting rest before they be hid from their eyes is the earnest request of

etc.

Prideaux Selby

Address: 'To the Revd. Mr. Westly / Fellow of Lincoln C / Oxon'.

Postmark: '9/AP'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Selby, Apr. 9, 1734 / New birth'.

Source: holograph; Duke University, Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box WF1.

From George Stonehouse¹

Milton²

Friday, April [19], 1734

Dear Sir,

I need make no apology to one of your Christian virtue for the performance of any good work, nor do I think myself sufficiently established in that happy frame of mind (which shall henceforward, by the grace of God, be my constant aim) to presume the attempting so great a piece of charity as what I am going to mention to you; it being the duty only of him who finds himself secure, and not of one who has so lately seen his error, and can think himself yet but feeble in the service of his Creator. Yet the weakest of us should see an evil impending over his fellow creatures with the utmost horror and, if insufficient himself, seek the best assistance he can for the removal of it. And the doing so perhaps may prove the most effectual means to strengthen his own virtue. But to delay the importance of this affair no longer, I shall let you know that my father has a borough which as usual is very well pleased with the candidates he has proposed to them. There is little doubt, I believe, of their succeeding. But I suppose you are not ignorant of the most solemn oath every man must take against bribery before he can give his vote. And not a man I can hear of but is most unhappily resolved to swallow it, in the most unnatural violence to his conscience. They encourage one another with a pretence that it is an imposition of man only upon them, and that the Parliament had no right to oblige such an oath. And this spirit runs universally through the borough. They are most of them poor, ignorant, day-labouring fellows, and can scarcely have a sense of what they are going upon. The day of election will come on very soon. Yet it is not impossible but the diligence of the minister may be of great service, if you could give him to perceive the danger himself is in, so tamely to see his cure run to destruction. I need say no more, as I hope to have your company Monday (for I believe I shall be able to send to this clergyman the day following) and Mr. Chapman will be so good to wait on you.

I am, dear sir (and hope to be more deserving it),

Your most sincere, humble servant,

George Stonehouse

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/216.

¹George Stonehouse, a native of Hungerford Park, Berkshire, matriculated at Pembroke College in 1729, receiving his BA (1733) and MA (1736). He was part of the Oxford Methodists during his student years and remained in touch, particularly with CW in later years. See *ODNB*; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 338–39.

²Likely Milton, Berkshire, south of Abingdon.

From Henry Newman (SPCK)

[London]
April 25, 1734

‘acquainting him that his packet was left at Mr. Rivington’s in St. Paul’s Church Yard on the 9th of April, directed as desired, and in it a small paper parcel for Dr. Pardo recommended to his care. Value 1.1.4.’

Source: abstract in letter book; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D2/22.
#15849.¹

¹A transcription was published in *JW, Works*, 25:732.

From Richard Morgan Sr.

[Dublin]
April 27, 1734

Reverend Sir,

I am very much obliged to you for the pains and trouble you have been at in explaining to me the duty of a Christian in your letter of the 15th of March,¹ of which I would not have you suspect me to have been totally ignorant before. I have from my youth conversed pretty much with the clergy of all denominations, and have read some good books, and particularly that excellent book called *The Whole Duty of Man*,² and I must have been very stupid not to have learned something from them. Notwithstanding all that has been said, I am still of opinion that a person who attends public and private prayers, and is not observed or known to commit sin, may be ranked in the class of good Christians; for charity, I think, obliges us to believe and presume that the person who behaves in this outward manner does his duty tolerably well in other respects.

There is a maxim in the law which requires as plain evidence in things as most other faculties, that when some outward forms are duly and well executed *omnia praesumuntur solemniter acta*.³ And I hope since the mind can only be guessed at by the outward behaviour, and as we are forbidden to proclaim our good deeds upon the housetops, the person who duly attends the services of the Church and his private devotions, and is not seen or known to commit sin, is entitled to our charitable opinion that he is a good Christian. Further, give me leave to divide the people of England into two classes, good and bad Christians (for there are but few those who do not profess themselves Christians). And supposing twenty bad for one that is good, I appeal then to your own experience, even though I should allow the majority of the bad to be much greater, whether the person of the behaviour which we speak of does not fall into the rank of the minority, i.e., the good Christians. One maxim more and so I have: *omnis homo praesumitur honestus donec*.⁴

(After talk of business, and intimating as if his son should spend some years at Oxford, he goes on:⁵) You have hit upon a very just and true answer to the proposal to my contributing to your charities in Oxford. The poverty of this country is too well known: there are to be seen and heard every hour very moving objects and miserable wretches, in all places here, who have much more need to claim the assistance of the neighbouring kingdom than to have anything taken from them. I have received a very obliging letter from your good father, to which I have wrote an answer, but whether to send it enclosed in this, as he desired, or send it away directly to Westminster, I have not yet determined. I am, with great sincerity, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate obliged and humble servant,

Richard M[organ]

Source: manuscript transcription; Morgan MSS, 82–85.⁶

¹See *Works*, 25:379–82.

²Richard Allestree, *The Practice of Christian Graces; or, The Whole Duty of Man* (1657).

³I.e., '*omnia praesumuntur rite et solemniter essa acta*'; all acts are presumed to have been done rightly and regularly.

⁴All persons should be presumed honest until [proven dishonest].

⁵This editorial summary is by CW, who is making this copy of the original letter.

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 25:385–86.

From Kezia Wesley¹

[Epworth]
June 16, 1734

Dear Brother,

I intended not to write till I could give you an account of Mr. [Westley] Hall's affair;² but it is needless, because I believe he won't do anything without your approbation. I am entirely of your opinion that we ought to 'endeavour after perfect resignation'. And I have learned to practice this duty in one particular, which I think is of the greatest importance in life—viz., marriage. I am as indifferent as it is lawful for any person to be whether I ever change my state or not, because I think a single life is the more excellent way. And there are also several reasons why I rather desire to continue as I am. One is because I desire to be entirely disengaged from the world. But the chief is I am so well apprised of the great duty a wife owes to her husband that I think it is almost impossible she should ever discharge it as she ought. But I can scarce say I have the liberty of choosing, for my relations are continually soliciting me to marry (that they may have one home which they love better³). Nor is it likely I shall live long single, for there will never be wanting an offer, good or bad, (if Mr. Hall does not proceed) which I may perhaps be glad to accept⁴ when I am quite tired out.

I grant it is a great temptation, when a person is always sick, for their friends to desire they may be removed out of their sight, almost upon any terms. It is certain that a child that had better health would be more serviceable to them, and a more agreeable companion. But this is providence to me, and I shall endeavour to be as resigned and cheerful as possible to whatever God is pleased to ordain for me. He could as easily have blessed me with indulgent parents as others (who would have preferred my happiness before their own private satisfaction), if he had seen I could have borne it. It is certain an inferior cannot comprehend a superior wisdom, especially when there is such a vast disproportion as there is between a finite and an infinite understanding; which must of necessity in a thousand instances make the judgments of God unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. I agree with you also that it is our duty to do all possible good, even to the evil and unthankful. 'To do good to them that hate us, and bless them that curse us' is undoubtedly our duty.⁵ But I should be glad to know the difference you would make in your behaviour betwixt a friend and an enemy. I think it a person's strict duty to show more tenderness, and let their love appear in all their words and actions after a particular manner, to a friend; which seems to be more than is required of us to a common acquaintance, or an enemy.

¹JW's diary has a summary for June 1734 that shows he wrote to Kezia, but not the date; in any case, this letter is clearly replying to one from JW which no longer survives.

²Apparently in the early spring of 1734 Westley Hall began courting Martha Wesley, currently living in London with her uncle Matthew Wesley. By some accounts the two even became engaged to be married. In May 1734 Hall accompanied JW to Epworth and was immediately enthralled with Martha's sister Kezia. By the end of the visit he was promising Kezia that he would be hers, only hers, forever. At this point none of the immediate family knew of Hall's courting of Martha. But John Whitelamb, who had married Kezia's sister Mary in December—over Kezia's vigorous objections (see her letter to JW of Jan. 18, 1733)—was aware and decided to return the favour by writing several letters to Hall disparaging Kezia. The result was that Kezia soon became aware that Hall was wavering in his commitments, though she did not know why. The ambivalence would carry on for over a year, until Hall married Martha on Sept. 13, 1735.

³Kezia is probably referring to Martha, now living in London.

⁴Orig., 'except'.

⁵Cf. Matt. 5:44 and parallels.

Dear brother, I hope you will not cease to tell me of whatever you think amiss in me, that I may at least endeavour to be better. And I beg you will pardon my weakness in not bearing being reproved (with sharpness) without showing more resentment than I ought to a friend. I shall think myself very happy if I can but bear patiently all the disappointments I am to meet with in life (without murmuring). And when I can reflect with pleasure of the good use I have made of my affliction (when the trial is over), I shall then be thankful for it. Indeed, if I had as much religion as I ought, it would not only bear up the mind under her sufferings, but make her rejoice in them, as they may be the instruments of procuring her the great and ultimate end of all her hope.

I am, dear brother,
Your sincere friend,

Kezia Wesley

P.S. Mr. Hall's changing so soon is almost as surprising as his ever liking; Wes[t]ley, thy name is man! Love to brother Charles. Adieu

He said in his first letter he had ordered two treatises of Mr. Law's and Parnell's poems,⁶ but I have heard nothing of them since. I would willingly return the money to Mr. Hall when I see you, if I could get the books.

Pray write soon.

No address portion remains.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] K[ezia] June 16. 1734'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 13/5.⁷

⁶The treatises by William Law were almost certainly *Practical Treatise upon Christian Perfection* (1726) and *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1729). The other volume was Thomas Parnell, *Poems on Several Occasions* (London: B. Lintot, 1722), a favorite of JW.

⁷Abridged transcription published in Moore, *Life of Wesley*, 1:87; and Stevenson, *Memorials*, 423.

From Martha Wesley

[London]
June 22 [1734]

Dear Brother,

I think, considering the dangerous place I have been in these three years, it might have been better if I had broke through the aversion I have to writing and wrote oftener to you.¹ But the time is past. I shall soon leave London. And I am apt to think I shall return no more. Which I should not be anxious about only for one reason, which is that I'm afraid that my father and mother will be displeas'd with me and think I should not have left it, which may be a means of making me very uneasy when I am with them. I should be very glad if you would write to my mother about it before I come home.

I am surpris'd neither Mr. Hall nor my sister [Kezia] should let you know their designs.² Yet methinks you are even with her by saying you 'care not how things turn out'. Sure you might be a little concern'd for the welfare of a poor sister likely to be left entirely destitute. I should think it a particular blessing of providence if he should be permitted to come into our family.

I have been employ'd about what I think a melancholy affair—viz., looking over and packing up my poor aunt [Anne] Annesley's clothes and familiars.³ My uncle⁴ was so kind as to go with me on Thursday to Hackney (there the executor's seal) and gave receipts for all the things. The goods, such as they are, we put in a cart and sent to Bridgwater, which occasioned me many speculations. I believe she was a very good woman. He by all accounts was a vicious man. And yet 'tis plain she loved him very well, one proof of which (I think) is that she could not persuade herself to burn his letters, though she burnt a good many others. I have too much reason to know 'tis possible to love the person at the same time we hate the vices. But it is so dangerous a trial that I shall always deprecate it the remainder of life as a very great judgment.

I thank you for your rules about meditation. 'Tis a duty I have been too negligent in. Though 'tis not in my power to think long like that upon any subject.

Dear brother, pray for me that the enemy may not prevail against me; that I may not be in the number of those who 'seek to enter in at the strait gate and shall not be able'.⁵

Farewell,

M. Wesley

I forgot to tell you I gave sister Lambert⁶ my book of prayers,⁷ and desire you to give me another. I have got Nelson,⁸ but want to carry Lucas down with me sadly.⁹

¹JW's diary has a summary for June 1735 that shows he wrote to Martha, but not the date; in any case, this letter is clearly replying to one from JW which no longer survives.

²See the note on the preceding letter from Kezia.

³Anne Annesley died in May 1734, and her will was proved on June 5.

⁴Likely Benjamin Annesley (1675–1767), Anne's brother, as she never married and her other brothers predeceased Anne.

⁵Luke 13:24.

⁶I.e., Anne (Wesley) Lambert.

⁷I.e., her copy of JW's *A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week*, which he published in 1733.

⁸Likely Robert Nelson, *A Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England: with Collects and Prayers for each Solemnity* (London: Churchill, 1704).

⁹While several books are possible, Susanna Wesley commended to her children Richard Lucas, *An Enquiry after Happiness* (London: Samuel Smith, 1685–96).

John Lambert is now removed from the place where he was.¹⁰ Poor sister Lambert desired me to remember you of the coat you promised her for Jacky.¹¹ I wish you'd send it before I go.

Pray remember me to brother Charles.

Address: 'To / the Revd Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Postmark: '22/IV'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] P[atty] June 22, 1734 / Acct. of A[unt] Nancy'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 12/5.

¹⁰Possibly in debtor's prison.

¹¹I.e., her son John Lambert Jr., now 8 years old.

From Mary (Granville) Pendarves¹

July 2, 1734

I never began a letter with so much confusion to anybody as I do this to Cyrus. I can't recollect that I ever used anyone so ill (if my being silent may be called ill usage), and at the same time must confess no one deserves it so little. What to do to extenuate my fault I do not know, which has truly been disadvantageous only to myself. Did I not find it absolutely necessary to my conduct (in that part of my life which ought to be my greatest concern) to renew this correspondence, I own I am so overcome with shame for what is past that I should not dare to put you in mind of my unworthiness. I give you now an opportunity of showing your forgiveness and generosity—not that you want extraordinary occasions to set those qualities in a proper light. Is it not some degree of grace to own one's faults frankly? But do I not destroy all merit by supposing I have any? When I sat down to write I thought I could have acquitted myself better, but I find it impossible to say anything in my justification. What will avail my saying I have constantly had an esteem for you? You have no reason to suppose that I have so much as barely remembered you. The more I consider the obligations I had to continue my correspondence with one who hath showed so many marks of an unfeigned desire to assist and promote my eternal happiness, the deeper is my concern for having forfeited so great an advantage. I am so sincerely sorry for the ill impression I have given you of myself that I shall shun you as a criminal would a judge; and whatever indulgence your goodness may incline you to show me, I never shall imagine you can have any regard for one that has so ungratefully neglected your friendship. To tell you my engagements with the world have engrossed me, and occasioned my not writing to you, will be enlarging my condemnation. I must say one thing more, 'that my going to Longleat, where for some time I was much indisposed, and not very well able to write'; and 'then removing to London to a new unfurnished house put me into a great hurry'; 'I waited for a leisure hour that I might write to you at large, till shame seized me so violently that I had not courage to write'; but at last have broke through it, and choose to suffer any reproach rather than lose the advantage of your friendship, without at least regretting that I have brought this mortification on myself. I would desire my compliments to Araspes, but I fear they can't be acceptable from one that has behaved herself so ill to Cyrus.

Adieu. Your happiness will ever be sincerely desired by

Aspasia

Source: manuscript transcription; 'Aspasia' Letter-book, 60–62, in the hand of Benjamin Ingham.²

¹Mary (Granville) Pendarves went to Ireland in Sept. 1731, her last-known letter to JW being on Aug. 26, 1731. JW's diary shows that he wrote to her not only on Sept. 28, 1731 (see *Works*, 25:313–15), but also Dec. 15, 1731, Apr. 8, and Aug. 25, 1732. However, there is no evidence of any letter reaching him from her during this period. In Apr. 1733 Aspasia returned from Ireland. She was in London in May and with Lady Weymouth at Longleat House in July. From there she went to stay with her mother and sister at Gloucester. JW wrote three letters to her in the months after her return, which were almost certainly greeted with silence. Only after JW stopped writing did Mary pluck up courage to write, likely prompted by a reported letter from JW to her sister Selima in May 1734. JW's reply (*Works*, 25:390–91) shows that he did not look for a renewal of their close relationship. His letters dwindled to one a year to Aspasia, until Sept. 17, 1736. In 1743 Mary Pendarves married Dr. Patrick Delany (1685?–1768), of whom she saw much while in Ireland. She became a close friend of the Royal Family, and long before her death in 1788 was recognized as a leading and respected figure in social and literary circles.

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:389–90.

From Kezia Wesley

Epworth
July 3, 1734

Dear Brother,

The reason (not excuse) of my silence was occasioned by my exceeding ill health. For I have never been well one day since you left Epworth.

Tis true my father has never been easy since we heard of my Aunt Nancy's will.¹ She left £1,000, to be paid fifty pound yearly, to my mother during her life. And then it is to be divided among her children, which has displeased my father much because he cannot dispose of it. He is so kind as to tell his friends he thanks God he is eased of the weight of four daughters out of seven, and he hopes he shall of the fifth in a little time.²

I question whether it is not my duty to leave off writing entirely. Every letter I write increases the pain at my stomach and makes me have worse health for some time after.

You accuse me of want of affection without reason, because you was always the egressor.³ The first occasion of your coldness proceeded from my not taking your advice in Mr. [Matthew] Horbery's affair, and that a friend might easily have excused because twas only a common failing of our sex. My greatest fault was loving too well, and therefore it was very fit I should always be disappointed. Tis my desire to love you as well as is consistent with my duty, but that foolish, female tenderness which I once had I hope will return no more. But you must,

Excuse my passion if it soar above
Your thought; no man can judge of woman's love.⁴

Mr. Whitelamb and I grow more indifferent than ever, nor can I think what way I must take to reconcile us.⁵ He will scarce speak if we meet. I would not choose to live like enemies; but if he will, I can't help it.

Forgiveness to the injured does belong,
He never pardons that commits the wrong.⁶

What, brother, you mean I cannot tell, for I never knew any that was so dear to me as you once was. If you desire my love, I must not fear you. For it is not in my nature to fear and love the same person.

I am, dear brother,
Yours till death,

Kezia Wesley

¹Ann Annesley (1661–1734), the sister of Susanna (Annesley) Wesley, had never married, so she left her estate to extended family.

²Four daughters had married: Susanna Jr., Mary, Mehetabel, and Anne; and he was anticipating that Kezia would marry Westley Hall.

³The first to break off communication, or leave the relationship.

⁴*Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1680), Hero's Answer to Leander, lines 3–4 (p. 68).

⁵See note 2 on Kezia's earlier letter of June 16.

⁶Dryden, *The Conquest of Granada*, Part II, Act. I, Scene II.

No address portion remains.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] K[ezia] July 3, 1734'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 13/6.

From Benjamin Ingham

[Ossett, Yorkshire]

July 27, 1734

Honoured Sir,

I meet with many cases of conscience in the country,¹ though I can find no casuist to solve them. I did not altogether know the advantage of living at Oxford so well before as I do now. Those that have it in their power to reside there are wise if they do so. To act well in the country requires more knowledge, prudence, and a great deal more zeal. It is scarce possible to imagine how wicked the *world* is. The generality are dead in trespasses and sins, and even those who pass for good Christians are sunk deep in a dead indifferency. Sincerity is as rare a thing as a black swan. Since I left your good mother,² I have not met with one person that is in good earnest for heaven, except the poor rug-maker³. God, indeed, is chief ruler in his heart. The most zealous conversation and the best discourses have no effect upon most people; they are no more moved or concerned than a stone. Reflecting frequently on this has confirmed my belief of an election of grace. I should be glad to know your thoughts on the subject at a convenient opportunity.

Since my coming into the country I have for the most part been *fervent* and *zealous* in private prayer and frequently very much affected with lively meditation, which hath comforted me much, and made me easy and cheerful. What dejects me most is when I lie long, or am idle, or in company where I can do no good. I desire to know how I ought to act when I am in company with superiors who talk only about trifles. Alas sir, I am vastly deficient in rising regularly and early, which is the very material point. Though, blessed be God, I have now a woman⁴ to call me, who rises pretty early, so that I hope to mend. I have methodized my time according to the following scheme. Supposing I rise at 5:00 or sooner, I spend till 6:00 in devotion; repeating the hymn in dressing, then write diary, afterward chant a psalm, then private prayer, and then meditate or read the Holy Scriptures. At 6:00, compose treatises. At 7:00 we have family prayers, I first read the lesson out of the New Testament using a collect before and after, then most of the Common Prayer; the rest of the hour I compose. 8:00, breakfast. 8:15, two poor children⁵ come to me to read. 8:45, private prayer; I propose to observe the three ancient hours of prayer when at home. From 9:00 to 11:00, I read in the Greek Testament, according to Franke's [directions⁶]. At 11:00, I go to teach the rug-maker's children to read. 11:45, private prayer for myself and friends. 12:00, dinner, read Norris.⁷ 1:00, shorthand. 2:00, Greek Testament. 4:00, walk. 5:00, devotion. 6:00, meditation, I choose the subject beforehand. 7:00, supper, read Milton.⁸ 8:00, read religious books with our family. 9:00, read family prayers. 9:30, private prayer for perseverance in behalf of myself and friends, for death, etc. On Wednesday and Friday, from 8:00 to 9:00, meditate on my sins. 12:00 to 1:00, meditate on

¹Ingham received his BA from Queen's College, Oxford on June 17, 1734 and the following week returned to Ossett, Yorkshire, the place of his birth, not to undertake a curacy (he was not yet ordained), but with hopes of transplanting the pattern of spiritual disciplines of the Oxford Methodists to his family and home community.

²Ingham had gone through Epworth on his way to Ossett, spending June 27 – July 1 in Epworth.

³William Wilby, of Ossett.

⁴Molly Harrup.

⁵John France and James Blackburn.

⁶August Hermann Francke, *Manuductio ad lectionem scripturae sacrae* (London: Downing, 1706), which JW had read with students earlier this year.

⁷According to his diary, Ingham had begun reading John Norris, *Practical Discourses Upon the Beatitudes of Our Lord ... with Three Other Volumes of Practical Discourses* (1728) on July 15.

⁸*Paradise Lost*.

Christ's sufferings and private prayer. 2:45, private prayer. 3:00, breakfast, read Norris. On Sunday, I propose to meditate two hours from 6:00 to 7:00,⁹ to read and [have] religious talk with our family or some poor neighbours at spare time. I shall readily submit to your better directions in any thing. I have begun to teach four poor children to write,¹⁰ which takes up a little time, and I wait upon them whenever they come. It is a hard thing to be so regular in the country as at Oxford. By my mother, I am tempted to indulge; by my relations and friends, to visit them often. Should I do it? Supposing a friend to visit me on a stationary day,¹¹ how must I behave myself? In eating and drinking, should I confine myself to such a quantity when with strangers? Your directions in these cases will be very useful.

My hearty love to your brother and all our friends. I have received a letter from Mr. Smyth.¹² He says he will acquaint his tutor with all his concerns. I design shortly to write to Mr. Ford¹³ and [George] Watson. I earnestly desire the hearty prayers of all our friends.

From

Your most obliged and affectionate friend and servant,

Ben. Ingham

Direct for me of Ossett, to be left at Ed Stringer's Stationer in Wakefield, Yorkshire.

Address: 'For / the Reverd Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln / College Oxford'.

Postmark: '29/IY'.

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/196.¹⁴

⁹I.e., morning and evening.

¹⁰Jonathan, Susy, and Sarah Wilby, and Hannah France.

¹¹The Oxford Methodists had reclaimed an early church practice of fasting on Wednesday and Friday afternoons, which they referred to as 'stationary days'.

¹²Thomas Smyth (b. 1714), of Beetham, had matriculated at Queen's College in 1732.

¹³John Ford (b. c. 1719), of Farnham, had matriculated at Queen's College in July 1733. He took the MA in 1740 and the BD in 1748.

¹⁴Transcription published in Richard Heitzenrater, *Diary of an Oxford Methodist: Benjamin Ingham* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), 288–89.

From the Rev. John Clayton¹

Manchester
August 2, 1734

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have carefully consulted your letter, and consulted Dr. [Thomas] Deacon upon it, and shall give you our thoughts of it with freedom and simplicity. As to the particular case of the gentleman you mention,² we could agree with Mr. Law if he had not used that phrase, 'Let him alone.'³ Indeed I think he is by no means to be let alone. Shall I see my brother fallen into a pit, and not lend him my hand to help him out? As to his classics and philosophy, let him pursue them, for so he will, notwithstanding all you can say to him against it. Therefore let not your advice be thrown away in endeavouring to dissuade him from them, but rather be employed in pointing out the way how studies may be sanctified, and made to turn to account. Indeed I cannot think such books unlawful, but on the contrary esteem them as useful helps, even to the Christian; as they are valuable monuments of antiquity, and authentic records of ancient times, and of the wonderful dealings of God with the sons of men.

As for your pupils in general, we thus far differ from Mr. Law. We agree with him in recommending Norris [and] Maleb[ranch].⁴ But then it is because we think them the best philosophers (where physics are not concerned) as well as the best Christians. But then as to religion, shall I say I differ from Mr. Law? Yes, but I believe it is because I am but a babe in Christ, and am not capable to digest the strong food he administers. For I must own in my present weakness of understanding I can see no other way of giving them a deep sense that they have but one business to do in life than to be constantly aiming at the *unum necessarium*;⁵ and speaking of it not a *little now and then*, but *frequently and fervently*. I am sure I want such sort of conversation, and a great deal of it, too. And as to fasting, communicating, etc., I must say this, that I do not know one instance of a person that took up the practice of them without being first moved thereto by the advice and exhortations of his friend. And is not fasting a means of improvement? Are there not some kind of devils not to be cast out but by fasting and prayer? And then is not the Holy Eucharist the highest means of grace, and of consequence the likeliest step to improvement? Indeed, I would hope we do not sufficiently understand Mr. Law. He cannot be against these things in his heart, in however strong language he expresseth himself when he is combatting the but too common notion of their being all that is required of us.

What is 'too logical' in religion? Is rule and method useful in worldly things of small importance, and superfluous in the great concerns of religion? True, simplicity of heart is all and in all, but how is this to be attained without prudential helps, and proper regulations? Mental prayer is doubtless a most

¹Clayton is replying to two letters of JW, of late June and early July, neither of which survive. JW was seeking Clayton's advice as a recent Methodist colleague in Oxford, but also as an intimate in Manchester of the non-juring leader, Thomas Deacon.

²Likely Richard Morgan Jr.

³This was apparently Law's reply to JW's letter of June 26 (*Works* 25:386–88). In a conference on Dec. 24, 1734 Law gave JW the same advice regarding Thomas Broughton.

⁴Orig., 'Norris Malb: (?)'. The copyist obviously had difficulty in transcribing this, as he did with other passages. The most likely work by John Norris being commended is *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life: with Reference to Learning and Knowledge*, an abridgement of which JW was on the verge of publishing—see Bibliography, no. 3. JW appended to this volume 'A Scheme of Books suited to the preceding *Reflections*' which included among recommended works in philosophy 'the works of the French philosopher, Nicole Malebranche'. The work of Malebranche that JW most consistently commended was his *Search After Truth* (1674 original in French).

⁵'The one thing necessary.'

acceptable service to God, because it is the most notable instance of our union with him. Scougal gives it the preference to vocal prayer as well as Mr. Law.⁶ So do Poiret and Madame Bourignon.⁷ But why should we put them in competition? Vocal prayer, meditation, hearing the Word, and receiving the sacrament, are they not divine institutions? And who then shall say that vocal prayer is proper only for those who have not attained to the faculty of praying mentally? Fit books for you and every Christian priest are all the Fathers of the three first centuries, whereby you may be enabled both to know and profess the faith once delivered to the saints, and to steer your course in the due medium between the monkish mysticism of the fourth century and the lukewarm indifferency of the present age. We entirely agree with the seventh observation, as believing that a different rule is necessary to one that is ripe in the faith from what was useful to him whilst he was only a babe in Christ.

In your last letter you inquire how far the several points in Dr. Deacon's book⁸ are essential. To this the doctor answers that he had nowhere asserted⁹ any of them to be essential, and that he is far from thinking them all of equal obligation. I believe, though, I could prove that there is no rite or ceremony prescribed which may not be defended from the writers of the second century. As for the gentleman's case who was confirmed before he was baptized, all that ever I have spoken to about it are of opinion that the confirmation ought to be repeated. For the design of that ordinance, being to complete the sacrament of baptism, and confirm to us those privileges we then received, it must suppose baptism to be previous, or otherwise it can be of none effect.

What sort of festivals do the Constitutions¹⁰ prefer to fast? I believe none but the greater, none of which can coincide with the stations except twelve of the fifty days between Easter and Pentecost, which accordingly take [the] place of the fasts.

As for your queries relating to the Holy Eucharist, I believe the two first, relating to its being a means of applying the merits of Christ to the receiver, and of its being the only means, may be fully determined in Johnson's *Unbloody Sacrifice*,¹¹ in that chapter which proves the Holy Eucharist to be a sacrifice both expiatory and propitiatory. The last query—viz., how this is consistent with authoritative absolution—has made me study the point; the result of which is that I believe the generally received doctrine of absolution is entirely modern and popish; and that the primitive absolution regarded the church censures primarily, and absolution from sin in a secondary sense only, namely as the offender was thereby admitted to the peace of the church, and of consequence to the participation of the Holy Eucharist, whereby alone remission of sins is to be attained. I think the whole present church may err—I had almost said that it doth so; it was never thought infallible till the Papists had a turn to serve by thinking it so. Indefectible it is, but I think by no means exempt from error, 'I am with you',¹² etc., [being] confined to the succession, and to a preservation from such error as would destroy the very being of a church. A church may be catholic though not orthodox, may retain all fundamentals, though she be blasted with superstition and error.

J.C.

Address: 'To / the Rev Mr Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln Col: / Oxon'.

⁶Henry Scougal, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* (London: J. Downing and G. Strahan, 1726).

⁷Antoinette Bourignon (1616–80), and her disciple, Pierre Poiret (1646–1719).

⁸Deacon's just-released *A Compleat Collection of Devotions* (London, 1734).

⁹Orig., 'asserted / stated (?)'.

¹⁰The Apostolic Constitutions, one of Deacon's major authorities, which through him and Clayton greatly influenced Wesley's own liturgical thought and practice.

¹¹John Johnson, *The Unbloody Sacrifice, and Altar, Unveiled and Supported*, 2 vols. (London: Knaplock, 1714–18); which JW read diligently during his voyage to Georgia.

¹²Matt. 28:20.

Endorsement: apparently by JW, 'VII. Mr. Clayton / Curious enough'.

Source: secondary (likely 19th century) ms transcription; MARC, MA 1977/610/40.¹³

¹³Transcription published in *Works*, 25:391–93.

From Henry Newman (SPCK)

[London]
August 6, 1734

'J. Wesley at Lincoln College 6 Augt. in answer to his of the 19th June acquainting him that his packets were left 25 June and 29 July at Mr. Rivington's in St. Paul's Churchyard.'

Source: abstract in letter book; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D2/23.
#16015.¹

¹A transcription was published in *JW, Works*, 25:734.

From Emilia Wesley

[Gainsborough]
[August 13, 1734¹]

Dear Brother,

I doubt not but you think long before this that I have laid aside all regard for you, that your last letter² has extinguished the great love I had for many years bore you; and, in short, that my friendship is as much in the wane as your own has visibly been ever since I left Lincoln.³ And were it so truly, according to your notion of things, you should not wonder at it. Whoever is false to his Creator, who neglects for ten years together the main end of life for so considerable a part of it, can't be expected to be faithful to any friend on earth. So true is that [line] of Tasso,

That he who fears no God will love no friend.⁴

Whether the case be so with me or not is unknown to any but God and my own conscience. However, I can assure you that no resentment or ill-nature, but abundance of business, which scarce leaves me so much leisure for the one thing necessary as even I desire, has prevented my answering yours. Were I not kept from church this Sunday by the fever, I don't know when I should have written.

And now what can I answer? To vindicate my own piety looks vain and ridiculous; to say I am in so bad a way as you suppose me to be, would perhaps be unjust to myself and unthankful to God. To lay open the state of my soul to you, or any of our clergy, is what I have no manner of inclination to at present, and believe I never shall. Nor shall I put my conscience under the direction of mortal man, frail as myself. To my own Master I stand or fall. Nay, I shall not scruple to say that all such desires in you or any other ecclesiastic seems to me to look very much like church tyranny, and assuming to yourselves a dominion over your fellow-servants which never was designed you by God. I know that your intention was good—viz., to reclaim a sinner from the error of her way. But how came you to suppose me such an one is the question. When the outward behaviour is blameless, we are all obliged by the law of charity to believe well of every one of our neighbours. Wherein have I been guilty, to your knowledge, of breach of duty?

With respect to my neighbour I may say without fear, and very truly, I am one more sinned against than sinning. I shall make some remarks on the particular faults you tax me with in yours, and then speak something of the friend that once was.

You tax me with making the world my God, the being negligent of duties public and private, the setting up my rest here, seeking for happiness in this life, etc.—all this heavy charge after living three days together. Whether I omitted family prayer must be known to all; whether I neglected private devotion can only be known to the Almighty and myself. Therefore tis criminal in you to suppose that there was such neglect. Whether I hold the necessity of frequent communion equally with you was a secret to our family, but now I own I do not hold it necessary to salvation, nor a means of Christian perfection. Don't mistake; I only think communicating every Sunday, or very frequently, lessens our veneration for that sacred ordinance, and consequently our profiting by it.

¹JW's annotation says '1735', but this letter is prior to Emilia's marriage to Robert Harper in June 1735.

²JW's diary has a summary that notes a letter to Emilia in June 1734, but not the exact date. This letter is not known to survive, but its contents are fairly clear from Emilia's responses.

³See her letter to JW of Nov. 28, 1731.

⁴Torquato Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or the Recovery of Jerusalem*, translated in verse by Edward Fairfax (London: J. Jaggard & M. Lownes, 1600), Bk. IV, st. 65, line 5. Kezia Wesley had quoted this line to JW in her letter of Jan. 18.

You seem to assert we ought to fix all our thoughts, hopes, desires, on God alone. Here again I differ. That God ought to have the preference in our practical judgment, that whenever duty comes in competition with our worldly interest or pleasure, this world should ever give place to the other, is my firm belief. But sure that wise and good Being who formed us and gave us these bodies with their several desires and tendencies never designed to take away our liberty so far as to deny all subordinate love to the creature. No, if I can but forsake any of those few things I love, when duty commands, I shall think myself innocent, and enjoy a quiet conscience. And herein you yourself speak as one that is guilty. Had you not lost your dear Mrs.[Sarah (Kirkham)] Chapone, where had your love been fixed? On heaven, I hope, principally, but a large share too had been hers; you would not have been so spiritualized, something of this lower world would have had its part of your heart, wise as you are. But being deprived of her, there went all hope of worldly happiness. And now the mind, which is an active principle, losing its aim here, has fixed on its Maker; for happiness will ever be the end that all rational beings will aim at, and when disappointed of one thing will soon fix on another. I hope we both shall place our affections chiefly there where true joys are to be found. Thus far in reply to yours. Now give me leave to expostulate with the friend.

Full well you know that even from our childhood you have been selected from all our numerous family for my intimate companion, my counsellor in difficulties, the dear partner of my joys and griefs. To you alone my heart lay open at all times, nor am I conscious of ever concealing my sentiments from your knowledge these many years, except in one only instance, which has happened lately. Say, where slept your friendship, dear brother, when you could censure me so hardly for no offence? If I have since I came to Gainsborough swerved from that strictness which I practised for many years at licentious Lincoln; if something here has gotten such hold of my heart as to draw me too strongly to this world, and to take up too much of my time, my thoughts, and affections—yet suppose there is such an impediment in my way, as it is unknown to you, and every other, and ever will be, you can have no right to censure for secret faults. That is the privilege of Him only who is omniscient. And here I cannot forbear speaking freely my doubts. Oh why has the good Author of our being given to us all such affections as we have. He cannot delight in the misery of any of his creatures. Why shall it chance that through the whole course of life, whatever is liked, or say loved, shall certainly either be taken from us or there shall such difficulties attend the enjoyment of it as cannot be surmounted by human prudence? Is it purely to afflict? Or is there not some further end? Is it not to show us that happiness must not be found on this side the grave, that we must not seek for rest here? Of which you have given me too plain, too sad a demonstration in the withdrawing of that love I held so dear. Yet whatever faults I have been guilty of in respect of God, to you I have been blameless, except loving you too well has been one. And considering you are a man I do too well love, that is the very thing which has disoblged you. I am

Your affectionate sister,

Emilia Wesley

Address: 'To / the Revd Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln Coll. / Oxford / by way of London'.

Postmark: '13/AV'. *Charges:* ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'S[ister] Em. Aug. 13. 1735 / S[he] angry'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 6/8.⁵

⁵Transcription published in Stevenson, *Memorials*, 270–72; abridged in *Works*, 25:430–31.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Sr.

Epworth
Tuesday, August 27, 1734

Dear Son,

This is to repeat my thanks for the care you have taken about my Job,⁶ for which you deserve the name of his fourth son—who, if Philo does not lie, was called Pilius. By the account you give me of the press, they must now have gotten to page 400 or upward. Therefore I desire that you would send me as soon as possible, or cause to be sent, those sheets which have been printed off since I left London, stitched up together, from page 320 (for so far I brought down with me) to the end of what is done, that I may correct that as I have done what I had before, which I doubt will swell my errata into an appendix, for I never yet saw a book of the same bulk printed with, I think, the twentieth part of the faults that are in this, which I think amount to several thousands.

As for us here, we are not idle, but have got the three faces of Pentapolis wellnigh finished,⁷ and shall have them wrought off by the end of this week. I've likewise just had a letter from Mr. Vertue,⁸ that he's going on with Job's phiz,⁹ and that 'twill be ready by that time the work is fit for it. We have received letters per post, as we suppose, from your second Nathanael,¹⁰ though we had not the happiness to see him, and believe he is stopped to give his friends a visit about Cana in Galilee. One thing I've writ[ten] you of twice or thrice already, which I think is of moment, but have yet received no answer. 'Tis that relating to Mr. Morgan of Ireland,¹¹ whether you had sent him any receipts, as he desired. If not, whether I should not send him the whole dozen. For as I wrote you, I have ninety by me to spare, which would not be respited any longer than till the new proposals are printed, two or three of which I think it would be proper to send along with the receipts. I should be glad to hear whether you have heard from your brother Samuel what receipts he has by him. I believe a good number, though he may have disposed of several of them, as he told me he doubted not to do, amongst his friends in Devonshire.

We are all well, except him who may best be spared, who is something better than he has been, and is, with blessing to you and company,

Your loving father,

Sam. Wesley

All send love.

P.S. Pray do you hear anything of John Lambert, and where he and his family are?¹² For I have not heard a syllable from him since I was in London.

⁶*Dissertationes in Librum Jobi*, then being printed by William Bowyer of London. It was published in 1736, though a few presentation copies appeared in 1735. John Wesley took over from his brother Samuel the task of seeing this through the press, especially in view of his brother's removal from London and then of their father's death. He himself translated much or most of the work into Latin, and made other literary contributions. See *Bibliography*, No. 7.

⁷Some of the illustrations being prepared to put in the *Dissertationes*.

⁸George Vertue (1684–1756), a prominent engraver based in London.

⁹I.e., his face our countenance.

¹⁰Likely a reference to Westley Hall Jr., whom JW had introduced to the family and was received almost as another brother.

¹¹Richard Morgan Sr.

¹²The Lamberts were in the London area. There is some suggestion that John had been in debtor's prison earlier in the year; see Martha Wesley's letter to JW of June 22, 1734.

The address half is missing.

Endorsement: by JW, 'My F[ather]', 'Aug 1734'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 1/11.¹³

¹³The letter is in the hand of John Whitelamb, with only the signature by Samuel Sr. Transcription published in *Works*, 25:393–94.

From Henry Newman (SPCK)

[London]
September 21, 1734

‘that his packet was left the 17 August at Mr. Rivington’s in St. Paul’s Churchyard, value 1.9.2.’

Source: abstract in letter book; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D2/23.
#16091.¹

¹Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:735.

From Henry Newman (SPCK)

[London]
November 7, 1734

‘Acquainting him that his packet was sent the 21st October to Mr. Rivington’s in St. Paul’s Churchyard. Value £4.6.3/4 Box and 1.6 porter, etc. 4.2.3/4.’

Source: abstract in letter book; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D2/23, #16166.¹

¹Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 25:735–36.

From the Rev. John Clayton

Manchester
November 9, 1734

Dear Sir,

Dr. [Thomas] Deacon desires me to thank you in his name for the care and pains you take about his Tillemont,² and will be much obliged to you for returning the money to him by Mr. Walker, or getting Mr. [Charles] Rivington to pay it to Mr. Richardson,³ when you have made it up the sum you mentioned. Mr. [Joseph] Hoole was desirous of joining with me in condoling the loss of your sister,⁴ but we know that you had not such need of laying again the foundations, to be told that God ordered everything for good to those that love and fear him.

He has lately be pleased by a turn of providence to extricate me from what I judged an insuperable difficulty. You remember poor Mrs. Jackson's case, how many difficulties it was clogged with; and yet God, by laying a more severe visitation upon her father than usual, has freed us from them all, and I hope made us all better Christians.

As to Mr. [Westley] Hall, I can only pray to God to direct him to choose that way which is the likeliest to advance his glory. His advice to you is certainly right, but would be more beneficial to me if you would please to inform me particularly of your method of meditating, for alas I have not yet attained to a due understanding of this most important part of duty. God be praised for his grace given to Mr. Morgan; may it please his goodness to go along with him, and make him an instrument in his hand of turning many to righteousness.

I reserve speaking my opinion of Clement's gnostic till I have more particularly studied that part of the *Stromata*.⁵ Dr. Byrom is in raptures when he speaks of it, which gives me some little jealousy that it is writ[ten] more like the work of a doctor than a father.⁶ Dr. Deacon judges it to be a little over-strained, but it was so long since he read it that he would by no means venture to pronounce his opinion, either to hinder you from studying it or prejudice you against it.

I have writ[ten] this post to Mr. Walker;⁷ what success my letter will have God only knows. Possibly he may forsake me, as he has done you. Be that as it will, I shall think myself bound still to have respect unto him, and to feed him with the sincere milk of the word, till he hath attained to that measure of the Spirit which will enable him to digest strong meat.

²Louis-Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont was an ecclesiastical historian. Deacon had translated into English his *History of the Arians, and of the Council of Nice* (London: George James, 1721). The 2 vol. work was reissued in 1732, and JW may have been assisting in selling off the remainder.

³Samuel Richardson (1689–1761), another publisher in London, and friend of Rivington.

⁴Mary (Wesley) Whitelamb died in late October, and was buried on Nov. 1, 1734.

⁵A major work of Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215).

⁶Dr. John Byrom (1692–1763), of Manchester, took his degrees at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was elected fellow there in 1714. Independently wealthy, he practiced medicine only on the side, authored some poetry, and took an significant role among the non-Jurors. Byrom also developed a unique system of shorthand, and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1724. Both JW and CW used Byrom's shorthand. They were also influenced by him in the 1730s through their connection with John Clayton and other non-Jurors in Manchester.

⁷John Walker, of Exeter, had matriculated at Balliol College in Feb. 1729, at age 17. He received his BA in 1732, and his MA in 1735. He was drawn into the Oxford Methodist circle about Apr. 1734, but vacillated and had withdrawn by this point.

Probably by the time this comes to hand Nowel⁸ will be nominated Hulme's exhibitioner.⁹ And when he is rescued from depending upon his friends, how knowest thou O man whether thou mayst save thy brother?¹⁰

Mr prayers are daily offered for you and all my friends that are with you, and I doubt not but in your intercessions you will always remember to mention

Your most affectionate brother in Christ,

J. Clayton

Address: 'To / the Rev. Mr. Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Postmark: '11/OC', 'MAN / CHESTER'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Clayt[on], Nov. 9 1734 / of Clemens Alexan[drinu]s'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/196.

⁸William Nowell (1714–82) of Whalley, Lancashire, who matriculated at Brasnose College, Oxford, in 1730, received his BA in 1734, and his MA from Oriel in 1738.

⁹An 'exhibitioner' at Brasenose was one who received a scholarship for further study out of a bequest of William Hulme (1631–91) and his wife.

¹⁰Cf. 1 Cor. 7:16.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Sr.

[Epworth]
November 20, 1734¹

Your state of the question, and only argument, is: 'The question is not whether I could do more good to others *there* or *here*; but whether I could do more good to myself; seeing wherever I can be most holy myself, there I can most promote holiness in others. But I can improve myself more at Oxford than at any other place.'

To this I answer, 1. It is not dear self, but the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, which should be our main consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life. Witness St. Paul and Moses.

2. Supposing you could be more holy yourself at Oxford, how does it follow that you could more promote holiness in others there than elsewhere? Have you found many instances of it, after so many years' hard pains and labour? Further, I dare say you are more modest and just than to say, there are no holier men than you at Oxford; and yet it is possible they may not have promoted holiness more than you have done; as I doubt not but you might have done it much more had you taken the right method. For there is a particular turn of mind for these matters: great prudence as well as fervour.

3. I cannot allow austerity, or fasting, considered by themselves, to be proper acts of holiness. Nor am I for a solitary life. God made us for a social life; we are not to bury our talent, we are to let our light shine before men, and that not barely through the chinks of a bushel, for fear the wind should blow it out. The design of lighting it was that it might give light to all that went into the house of God. And to this academical studies are only preparatory.

4. You are sensible what figures those make who stay in the university till they are superannuated. I cannot think drowsiness promotes holiness. How commonly do they drone away their life, either in a college or in a country parsonage, where they can only give God the snuffs of them, having nothing of life or vigour left to make them useful in the world.

5. We are not to fix our eye on one single point of duty, but to take in the complicated view of all the circumstances in every state of life that offers. Thus in the case before us, put all circumstances together: if you are not indifferent whether the labours of an aged father for above forty years in God's vineyard be lost, and the fences of it trodden down and destroyed; if you consider that Mr. M.² must in all probability succeed me if you do not, and that the prospect of that mighty Nimrod's coming hither shocks my soul,³ and is in a fair way of bringing down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave; if you have any care for our family, which must be dismally shattered as soon as I am dropped; if you reflect on the dear love and longing which this poor people has for you, whereby you will be enabled to do God the more service, and the plenteousness of the harvest, consisting of near two thousand souls, whereas you have not many more scholars in the university; you may perhaps alter your mind, and bend your will to his who has promised, if in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our paths.⁴

Source: published abridged transcriptions; Priestley, *Original Letters*, 48–50; collated with Hampson,

¹Headed in Priestley's version 'Extract of my father's letter, dated Nov. 20, 1734.' This was a reply to JW's of Nov. 15, 1734 (*Works*, 25:395).

²In Samuel Sr.'s letter to Samuel Jr. on Dec. 4, in the hand of John Whitelamb, the potential future rector is 'Mr. P'; but here both Priestley and Hampson interpreted it as 'M'. This discrepancy is hard to explain. 'P' might be John Pennington, Wesley's former curate.

³Nimrod is identified as a mighty hunter; cf. Gen. 10:9; he came to be associated with those who rebel against God.

⁴Cf. Prov. 3:6.

Memoirs, 1:120–24, an independent but much more heavily edited reading of the same extract made from the original, probably by JW, but possibly by Samuel Wesley Jr.⁵

⁵Collated transcription published in *Works* 25:395–97.

From Thomas Broughton

[London]

November 20, 1734

Reverend and Dear Sir,

The news of your safe return out of Lincolnshire and of your father's recovery from his dangerous illness was very agreeable to me and your friends here.¹

My story in town has been, and will be, longer than I thought at first. My second brother is lately come and I (as in duty bound), having his spiritual as well as temporal interest at heart, have advised with all our good friends here about the most effectual means to win his affections, which alone can prepare his heart to receive any good impressions I may be assisted to make upon it. The opinion of my friends was that I should stay with him some time in town. This made me jealous over myself and threw me upon my knees to beg advice of God—his will, I hope, is done, not mine. Presently after this a friend (Mr. [Charles] Rivington's brother) informed me that Colonel Schutz, privy purse to the prince,² wanted a tutor for two of his sons, and if I thought of disposing of myself in such a way of life he would recommend me. I thanked him, but knowing experimentally of inconveniences and temptations, besides the importance of such an undertaking, I was very cold in offering my service. However, that I might not reject any proposal which seemed to come from the Good Spirit (as this, I hope, did), I suffered my friend to mention me to the Colonel (whom I heard before to be a religious man), yet not without securing me a retreat if, upon maturer deliberation, I should judge it unfit for me. This was done. I saw the Colonel and Captain Hudson, his worthy friend. He told me his design; and I, him, my way of life. We did not disagree. I was now almost determined to enter upon my charge, especially since he told me he would rather have his children doorkeepers in the house of the Lord than to dwell with 'princes in the tents of ungodliness'.³ I got leave to consider upon it for a day. When Sir John [Philipps], Mr. Thorold,⁴ Captain Hudson, and Mr. Rivington thinking it a very providential thing, I offered myself to wait upon the young gentlemen three hours in a day till Christmas. I began last Friday, and am to have a guinea a week. If this is not the will of God we shall, I hope, be enabled to find it out by the time I have allotted. Be you the meanwhile, good sir, earnest in interceding for me, with my other good friends. I hope that I fear God still, and that we may all continue to do so is the prayer of, reverend sir,

Your most affectionate and obliged humble servant,

T. Broughton

My brother seems to be (God be praised) of a sweet, serious temper. We shall lodge (I believe) with Hones (?) and Mr. Laserre. My little brother I shall send next week.⁵ I will desire you to pay his

¹JW had arrived back in Oxford from his trip to Epworth on Nov. 8.

²Colonel John Shutz was currently privy purse of the Prince of Wales.

³Ps. 84:10.

⁴This is almost certainly John Thorold (1703–75), son of Sir John Thorold, 7th Baronet of Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, whose vacating a fellowship at Lincoln College, Oxford, in 1724 opened the way for JW to be elected. This younger Thorold, living initial in London, was a generous supporter of the SPCK and encouraged the Wesley brothers in their mission to Georgia. He was also sympathetic to the early revival in London, but his attention shifted increasingly to Lincolnshire and his political role, particularly after succeeding his father in 1748.

⁵There is no record that Broughton's younger brother actually matriculated at Magdalen, or any other college in Oxford.

entrance money for him. I believe Magdalen school is the soberest, and Woods⁶ and Etty⁷ will take care of him.

My best wishes attend all my good friends. I have seen Mr. Grey, who is highly pleased I am with his friend Mr. Shutz.

No address information.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Brou Nov. 20. 1734', in left margin of first page.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/19.

⁶There is no record of a Woods currently resident at Magdalen; Broughton may mean Thomas Woods (1682–1753), headmaster of Abingdon School, in Abingdon, Oxfordshire, who was a friend of the Wesley brothers.

⁷Andrew Etty, son of Marmaduke Etty of Oxford, was preparing to matriculate at Magdalen College in Feb. 1735 (aged 16). He was apparently already connected to the Oxford Methodists.

From Benjamin Ingham

[Ossett]

November 30, 1734

Reverend Sir,

Such is the wretchedness of my state at present, that, if I durst, shame would persuade me to conceal it from my best friends. God, of his great goodness, has been pleased to chastise me for my sins with an ague. But I am afraid I shall make a very indifferent use of this Fatherly correction. It may justly be expected that I should be more dead to the world and filled with more fervent longings and thirstings after God—that my diligence would have been quickened, and my devotion inflamed. But alas sir, I am become more sensual, more indulgent, and more subject to vanity. To early prayer I am now a stranger; I think it well to rise at seven. In my sickness my thoughts for the most part were monstrous and trifling. I would fain make my distemper an excuse. But though it weakened my body, it is strange that it should disorder the soul too. To give you one instance of my weakness: when I was pretty well recovered, I could not deny myself so much as to walk out for my health. But with very little persuasion, I went several times a-shooting. Nay, I thought it necessary, though I had renounced it. But it pleased God graciously to let my distemper relapse, which took away the power, though not the desire, of going. At present I keep altogether at home, scarce stirring out of doors. My eyes are weak, yet I am in a fair way of recovering my bodily health.

The only thing in which I have not been much deficient is in teaching the children, and conversing at night with the neighbours, when I was able to do it. And, indeed this has been a means of preserving myself from utterly sinking. God hath been pleased to bless my weak endeavours with pretty good success. But I find that he manifests the effect when we least expect it; hereby telling us that not our endeavours, but his almighty arm, doth the work. The honest rug-maker makes very slow advances in learning; I think to dissuade him from it, unless you advise me to the contrary. My sister proceeds excellently, and by her example provokes me to what I otherwise should not do. I desire you to resolve me: Whether it be lawful to sell a thing above its worth, purely because the buyer hath a desire of it? Whether it be convenient (or lawful) for a Christian to dwell with a Quaker when under no necessity? Whether one ought to eat, or openly declare they fast, when no necessity puts them upon it?

Dear sir, let me beg your earnest prayers for

Your unworthy, most obliged friend and servant,

B. Ingham

My love to your good brother, etc.

I have heard from Mr. [John] Burton. Mr. [William] Wogan joins with him in service to you and your brother. He expects to return by Oxford about Christmas. They were indifferently in health.

If I recover my health perfectly, would you advise me to visit Mr. [John] Clayton before I return to Oxford?

Our family send their service.

Address: 'For / The Revd. Mr. John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Postmark: '2/DE'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Benj. Ingham / Nov. 1734'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/84.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

[Tiverton, Devonshire]
Christmas Day [December 25], 1734

Dear Jack,

Yesterday I received a letter from my father¹ wherein he tells me you are unalterably resolved not to accept of a certain living if you could get it, and that for this reason:

The question is not whether I could do more good to others *there* or *here*, but whether I could do more to myself; seeing wherever I can be most holy myself, there I am assured I can most promote holiness in others; but I am equally assured there is no place under heaven so fit for my improvement as Oxford.

After this declaration I believe no one can move your mind but him who made it; much less do I think myself qualified for that purpose. You may perhaps say I have been too passive. I left Oxford, with all its opportunity of good, on a worldly account, at my father's desire. I left my last settlement by the same determination, and should have thought I sinned both times if I had not followed it. You may ask, if I suppose you not to be persuaded, and myself not fit to persuade, why do I write? For a plain reason. It is my duty, if I can, to please and profit my father and mother; and, secondly, to inform and profit you. The event I leave to the Almighty — ὁ Χωρῶν Χωρεῖτω.²

I shall not draw the saw³ of controversy; and therefore, though I judge every proposition flatly false, except that of your being assured, yet I shall allow every word, and have nevertheless this to say against your conclusions:

1. I see your love to yourself, but your love to your neighbour I do not see. This was not the spirit of St. Paul, when he wished himself accused for his brethren's sake,⁴ the lowest sense of which must be thus much, to be deprived of the outward means of grace and cut off from visible communion. What, would you not lose one degree of glory were it possible to be instrumental in saving several, perhaps very many, from the place of torment?

2. You are not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. You are solemnly engaged to do it before God, and his high priest, and his church. Are you not ordained? Did you not deliberately and openly promise to instruct, to teach, to admonish, to exhort those committed to your charge? Did you equivocate then with so vile a reservation as to purpose in your heart that you would never have any so committed? It is not a college, it is not an university, it is the *order of the Church* according to which you were called. Let Charles, if he is silly enough, vow never to leave Oxford, and therefore avoid orders. Your faith is already plighted to the contrary; you *have* 'put your hand to the plough',⁵ to that plough.

¹The letter received at Tiverton, Devon, on Dec. 24, 1734, was clearly that begun by the rector of Epworth on Dec. 4, informing Samuel of the decision announced by JW in his letter of Nov. 15. In that letter of Dec. 4 the rector stated that he had written in his own hand 'for many days together', and was asking John Whitelamb 'to transcribe and finish it'. Thus the date of posting was probably about two weeks after its beginning. Meanwhile, Dec. 10–19, JW had completed his own lengthy apologia for this decision, which also found its way to Tiverton only after another six weeks. It appears that JW's letters of Nov. 15 and Dec. 11 had not mentioned this subject.

²Freely translated, 'Let him who sees to all events, see to this!'

³Orig., 'law'.

⁴Cf. Rom. 9:3.

⁵Cf. Luke 9:62.

I mention no less considerations, but restrain myself, though not a little surprised that you seem to hint, what scarce ever before entered the head of a Christian, that a parish priest cannot attain to the highest perfection possible on this side heaven.

I am, etc.,

S. Wesley

Source: published transcription; Priestley, *Original Letters*, 17–19.⁶

⁶Priestley transcription republished in *Works*, 25:410–11.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Sr.

Epworth
January 21, 1734/5

Dear Son,

About an hour since your λόγος παρακλήσεως¹ of the 13th instant came to hand,² and indeed not before I had need of it, being so disturbed with the prospect of all I was to expect from my last that my soul refused comfort, and I had a very little share of common sense left, especially when I considered how extremely weak I was, and found myself grow sensibly weaker every day, by being ground between pain and the fore-mentioned considerations, together with the apprehension that I must soon leave the world, and *Job* unfinished together with it.

However, God helped me so much at last that I hope I did entirely leave both myself and all I had with him, to do just what he pleases with me; and since that I've had a little more rest. My people, I must needs say, have been very kind to me during my long illness, which has brought me now so low that I can't walk half a dozen times about my chamber. But then I'm often refreshed with seeing a great part of Mr. Hales'[s]³ noble present of books lying in my window, near half of which I've already spread in my parish, some to those who come to see me, and to others I have sent them, and that, I bless God, with very good effect, many having read them to others, whereby a spirit of Christianity beyond what I have hitherto known seems to be raised amongst them; one proof whereof there is in the greater frequency at the sacraments. Nor is Mr. [John] Whitelamb wanting to any part of his duty, though I've not been able to preach or give the sacrament to them myself except one day, and that with his assistance.

So first to the first, and now let's go on to matter of less moment, though I hope not quite frivolous neither.

Had I had Mr. [Charles] Rivington's advice at first, all my plates and cuts I find had been done before this, and that with less expense, and to greater perfection. The agreement you have made with the [en]graver seems to be very reasonable. Whether the cuts are to be done in sheets or half-sheets I leave to you and Mr. Rivington. But I would have Leviathan's rival, that is the whale, as well as the crocodile; and as for the elephant, he is so common that he need not be added. I'm glad the toms want no more than retouching, and especially that Mr. Garden is not ill-pleased with them. Job in adversity I leave to your direction, as likewise the frontispiece, which Mr. [George] Vertue is doing, who now duns me pretty hard for money for it, and I've writ[ten] him lately to send me word what he'll have for the whole, when it is finished, and what he desires in part, with a promise to send him some money by the first opportunity I have of doing it; and as soon as ever I hear from him you shall from me. As for poor Pentapolis, it must even shift as it can, though my heart is pretty much in it, and I've taken no little pains about it. This I must likewise leave with you. But can't you send me a copy of the drafts before they're engraven, that I may weigh them as is proper? As for Job's horse, I can't for my life imagine how I shall get him into my Lord Oxford's stable,⁴ I mean get liberty to inscribe it to him, unless you yourself could speak to my Lord

¹A word of exhortation, or encouragement; see Acts 13:15; Heb. 13:22.

²JW's letter of Jan. 13 is not known to survive.

³Stephen Hales (1677–1761), Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, created DD of Oxford in 1733. He was a member of the Common Council of the Georgia Trust, and one of those who saw the *Simmonds'* passengers off from Gravesend in Oct. 1735. He took a warm personal interest in the Wesley family.

⁴Lord Edward Harley (1689–1741), 2nd Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, a supporter of Samuel Wesley Jr.

Duplin⁵ about it, who seems a very well-natured gentleman, and I believe would not be unready to employ his good offices for me. Have you yet found any news of *de morbo Jobi*,⁶ which has been so long incognito? Or is there anything else that you find wanting? I heartily commend you and your brother to God, and am this evening, your somewhat liver⁷ father,

Sam Wesley

I have waited for thy SALVATION, O GOD, and MAZAL-TOB⁸ is coming.⁹

This day in the morning Mr. Whiteley went. God knows whither, though he got his finishing stroke in a draught of double cinnamon water of near a full pint the day before in the morning. But this would not lay conscience to sleep, though it soon did him, as well as his senses, speech, and reason, for it was plain that he died in inward horror, and had been so some time before, his body just before his departure turning as black as a coal. However, I have a better account to give you of several young men, the most considerable in my parish, that are lately married, and from whom I hope either I or my successors shall receive comfort, whereof I may write you more at large in my next. Mr. Whiteley is to be buried this night, though I'm afraid no great lamentation will be made over him.

Address: 'To / Mr John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln-College / Oxon / These / per London'.

Postmark: '2[4?]/IA'. *Charges:* ((4)), 'In all 7'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'm[y] f[ather] Jan. 21, 1734/5 / The last I recd from him'.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 1/12.¹⁰

⁵George Henry Hay (1689–1758), 8th Earl of Kinnouli, also called Lord Dupplin, was a brother-in-law of Edward Harley.

⁶Job's disease.

⁷I.e., more lively.

⁸Good fortune.

⁹This sentence and the signature are in the rector's own hand; the body of the letter is in the hand of John Whitelamb.

¹⁰Transcription published in *Works*, 25:414–15.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.¹

[Tiverton,] Devon
February 8, 1734/5

Dear Jack,

Charles was in the right to desire I might have your whole letter.² Though you have stated the point so as to take away the question, at least all possibility of differing about it, if it be only this, whether you are to serve Christ or Belial. I see no end of writing now, but merely complying with your desire of having my thoughts upon it, which I here give in short, and I think almost in full, though I pass over strictures on less matters.

1. Your friends, retirement, frequent ordinances, and freedom from care, are great blessings; all except the last you may expect in a *lower degree* elsewhere. Sure all your labours are not come to this, that more is absolutely necessary for you, for the very being of your Christian life, than for the salvation of all the parish priests in England. It is very strange.

2. To the question what good have you done at Oxford you are not careful to answer. How comes it then you are so very careful about the good you might do at Epworth? 'The help that is done on earth, he doth it himself,'³ is a full solution of that terrible difficulty.

3. The impossibility of return, the certainty of being disliked by them that now cry you up, and the small (comparative) good my father has done, are good prudential reasons; but I think can hardly extend to conscience. You can leave Oxford when you will. Not surely to such advantage. You have a probability of doing good there. Will that good be wholly undone if you leave it? Why should you not leaven another lump?

4. What you say of contempt is nothing to the purpose, for if you will go to Epworth I will answer for it you shall in a competent time be despised as much as your heart can wish. In your doctrine you argue from a particular to a general. 'To be useful a man must be esteemed' is as certain as any proposition in Euclid, and I defy all mankind to produce one instance of directly doing spiritual good without it in the whole book of God. You join to contempt, hatred and envy; but the first is very hardly consistent, the latter utterly incompatible, with it, since none can possibly envy another but for something he esteems.

5. God, who provided for the flock before, will do it after my father. May he not suffer them to be what they once were, almost heathens? And may not that be prevented by your ministry? It could never enter into my head that you could refuse on any other ground than a general resolution against the cure of souls. I shall give no positive reason for it till my first is answered. *The order of the Church* stakes you down, and the more you struggle, will hold the faster. If there be such a thing as truth I insist upon it you must, when opportunity offers, either perform that promise, or repent of it: *utrum mavis*.⁴

I am, dear Jack, yours, etc.

As short as this letter is, it has been a full fortnight in transcribing;⁵ a fair warning not to take copies.

Source: published transcription; Priestley, *Original Letters*, 41–43.⁶

¹Replying to JW's letter of Jan. 15 (*Works*, 25:413–14).

²JW's letter to Samuel Wesley Sr. of Dec. 10–19, 1734 (*Works*, 25:397–410).

³Ps. 74:13 (BCP).

⁴From '*utrum horum mavis accipe*'—'take whichever you prefer'.

⁵Samuel Jr. apparently drafted a reply immediately on receiving JW's of Jan. 15, and added the date, Feb. 8, when transcribing a fair copy for posting.

⁶Transcription republished in *Works*, 25:416.

From the Rev. Samuel Wesley Jr.

[Tiverton]
[c. February 22, 1735¹]

Dear Jack,

1. You say you have but just enough. Had ever man on earth more? You have experienced less to be insufficient. Not in the course of priesthood to which you are called. In that way, I am persuaded, though he that gathereth much can have nothing over, yet he that gathereth little can have no lack.²

2. There is danger in thinking of the good you have done, but not of what you may. Vainglory lies both ways. But the latter was your duty. So was the former, unless you can compare two things without thinking of one of them.

3. The good at Oxford is more diffusive. It is not *that good* you have promised. You deceive yourself if you imagine you do not here think of *what you have* done. Your want may be better supplied at Epworth; not if my father is right in his successions.

4. 'A Christian will be despised everywhere; no one is a Christian till he is so; it will further his doing good.' If universal propositions, I deny them all. Esteem goes before the good done, as well as follows it. 'A man may both despise and envy.' True; he may have a hot and cold fit of an ague. Contempt in general is no more incompatible with than necessary to benefiting others.

5. See (1) and (3).

6. I said plainly, I thought you had made a general resolution; as to taking the first offer, I supposed an opportunity, a proper one; and declare now my judgment, should you live never so long, in the ordinary course of providence you can never meet another *so proper*. [⁴An ordained tutor who accepts not a cure is perjured.¹] Alter the term into, 'who resolves not to accept', and I will maintain it, unless you can prove either of these two: 1) there is no such obligation at taking orders; 2) this obligation is dispensed with. Both which I utterly deny.

I am, dear Jack,
Yours, etc.

N.B. I forgot the date in the foul copy.³

Source: published transcription; Priestley, *Original Letters*, 46–48.⁴

¹Answering JW's of Feb. 13 (*Works*, 25:417–18). The date is calculated from that of receipt, Feb. 27, when JW noted in his diary: 'L[ette]r fr[om] b[rother] S[am] alm[os]t conv[in]ced [me] of duty to go to Epw[orth].' On the 28th JW wrote asking the Bishop of Oxford if indeed his ordination vows bound him to this duty.

²Cf. Exod. 16:18; 2 Cor. 8:15.

³I.e., the 'rough draft'.

⁴Transcription republished in *Works*, 25:419–20.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley¹

[Epworth]
[c. February 25, 1735]

The visible order of providence is to be observed by all, whether strong or weak in the faith, and this can't be done, nor civil government be established and the due subservience of one man to another preserved, without ensigns of authority, and difference in houses, furniture, and apparel, all which are marks of distinction, and as such in obedience to the will of God, and not for vainglory, they ought to be used, and he that breaks his rank and goes out of character, so far as he does so, so far he breaks the external order of the universe and abuses his Christian liberty.

Source: holograph; MARC, MAM JW 5/84.²

¹Susanna's notes on back of JW's letter of Feb. 14 (*Works*, 25:418–19).

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:419; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 167.

From John Potter, Bishop of Oxford¹

Old Palace Yard, Westminster
March 1, 1735

Reverend Sir,

It doth not seem to me that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can as a clergyman better serve God and the Church in your present or some other station; but if I live to see you, I shall be glad to know the grounds of your question and the full effect of it, and may then be able to return you a more particular answer, who am, sir, your affectionate brother,

Jo. Oxford

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/234.²

¹John Potter (1674?–1747), a former Fellow of Lincoln College, and Bishop of Oxford from 1715 to 1737, when he was translated to Canterbury, had ordained John Wesley as deacon on Sept. 19, 1725, and as priest on Sept. 22, 1728. Clearly Wesley's letter to him (noted in his diary for Feb. 28), was as brief and colourless as possible, seeking a reply on general principles.

²Published in *Works*, 25:420.

From George Whitefield¹

Oxford
April 1, 1735

Reverend Sir,

It will no doubt in some measure surprise you to receive a letter so soon after your leaving Oxford, from one I believe you so little expected. But as I always found you so exceeding ready to assist me in any emergency when at college, and my present circumstances requiring some immediate and prudent counsel, I hoped you would not take it ill if I troubled you with a letter.

The first thing, sir, I would inform you of is of my state of body, which at present seems to be very uncertain, and by what symptoms I have as yet perceived I am likely, if not timely prevented, to fall into a diabetes. As there is nothing which would give the enemy more room to blaspheme than my falling into a fit of sickness (everyone, to be sure, being ready to impute it to an over abstemiousness), so I would by all means take the most proper method that could be advised me in order to prevent (by the divine blessing) so unhappy a consequence. What makes me imagine myself in but an indifferent state of health is this. Yesterday I asked Mr. [Walter] Chapman to lend me Dr. Cheyne's *Essay on Health and Long Life*,² having resolved some time ago for the future to consult nothing as to my eating and drinking but what should be essentially necessary for the preserving my body in a fit condition to serve my Master and fellow Christians. I have not had time as yet to revise³ much of him, but providentially found a place which I think exactly suits my present case; and that is the ninth chapter, where he treats of persons of weak nerves. All the symptoms he gives of them jointly almost concurring in me. And as such a thing, if not maturely stopped, may bring on some chronical distemper, I would desire you to look over that part of the doctor's treatise and see whether I had not best make use of such means as he there prescribes in order to preserve my health. What makes me still more desirous of following his directions is this, that I perceive my late cold has entirely proceeded from the causes he has assigned—viz., from taking in too great a quantity of nitrous particles of air by walking early these several weeks last past in Christ Church walk. And I find myself grow better now I continue within till about the middle of the day. I perceive I grow weak and thirsty. And from drinking too large a quantity of water, gruel, and sage tea last week, and eating meat last Sunday, I have had a preternatural flow of urine, making as much if not more water than I drank. But this I found I abated by lessening in the quantity of victuals—which now is only a quarter of bread and six ounces of sage tea at breakfast, and the same quantity of bread with a dish of hot milk porridge in the evening. Whether this is sufficient, or how I had best proceed in this affair, or what I had best take for my living after Lent, I should be glad to be informed by you as soon as possible. Guessing that your judgement and experience in these particulars, as well as your great kindness and Christian charity will not permit you to defer answering my letter long, I have been with an apothecary, but propose following no one's prescription till I hear from you. Dr. Cheyne, I think, prescribes such things as herbs, milk, etc., for spring, which I would very readily come in with, having little or no appetite and hoping such a way would be a means of mortifying me to sensual pleasures and greatly promote Christian purity. But your judgement must determine here. I am a little concerned to give you so much trouble; but I believe you will think it none, therefore shall say no more.

As for the state of my soul, I trust that it is in a progressive state. I have had frequent dejection and find myself at present, though exceeding easy and calm, yet not near so fervent as the two last weeks. But I endeavour daily to renew my acts of absolute resignation to the will of God, not doubting of his

¹George Whitefield (1714–70) was born in Gloucester, and matriculated at Pembroke College, Oxford in 1732. In 1734 CW befriended him, introduced him to JW, and he became active in the Oxford Methodists. This is the first known surviving letter of Whitefield to JW.

²George Cheyne, *An Essay on Health and Long Life* (London: Printed for George Strahan, 1724).

³I.e., review.

almighty protection both in my body and soul through the infinite merits of my Master, whom alone I desire to follow and be made conformable to, both in this life and the next.

Your father I suppose is by this time ready to offer up his last sacrifice and prepared (if not actually entered into) for the joy of his Lord. May I follow him as he has Christ. Mr. Ratcliff⁴ favoured me with two hours conversation lately, and I find grants almost everything I asked him, only objects against singularity, the obligation we lie under to fast, and to communicate as often as possibly we can. The poor prisoners at Bocardo seem really very sensibly touched with a sense of Christianity and are very desirous of receiving the sacrament. I gave them the Bishop of Man and should be glad to know how they might have an opportunity of communicating.⁵ If I hear out of the country, your advice will be exceedingly wanting, therefore must beg you if you please to vouchsafe me an answer to inform me how I can carry on (if you will do me such a favour) a correspondence with you whilst you are in the country. But alas sir, I fear you are quite wearied out. Give me leave therefore only to ask pardon for this freedom, to beg your hearty prayers and friends' [prayers], and with all due respects to yourself and brother, Mr. [Westley] Hall, etc., to subscribe myself, reverend sir,

Your very much obliged and humble servant,

George Whitefield

P.S. Whilst I was writing it came into my mind that my present temper of body may arise partly from the aridity providence I believe has sent me. I have a much better use of my understanding than usual, but find my lips dry, little pains over my breasts, and an unusual pressure on my stomach quite different to what I had formerly.

Address: 'To / The Revd Mr John Westley / at his father's Minister of Epworth / in Lincolnshire / To be left at the Gainsborough Posthouse / and sent from thence'.

Postmark: '03/AP', and 'OXFORD'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'G Whd / Apr. 1. 1735'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/124.

⁴John Ratcliff (1699–1775), who received his BA (1722) and MA (1725) at Pembroke College, Oxford, was serving as a tutor there.

⁵Thomas Wilson, *A Short and Plain Instruction for the Better Understanding of the Lord's Supper; with the necessary preparation required, for the benefit of young communicants* (London: Charles Rivington, 1733).

From Thomas Broughton¹

London
April 15, 1735

Reverend and Dear Sir,

The same evening I received the favour of yours I waited on Sir John [Philipps], promising myself a kind reception. He rejoiced with me indeed to hear that your father was yet alive, but did not close readily with me in attempting what I hoped he would, which if crowned with success might prove a means of making our declining friend end his days in peace. What shall we say for so sudden, so unwished for a change? O put not your trust in princes.²

Sir John disowns his giving me any encouragement to promise you hopes of success. Did I then write you an untruth? If his charge be just, I did. But his words were, that 'though he had solicited the Bishop of London and Sir Robert³ in behalf of another (not for Epworth) yet he would be glad to serve Mr. Wesley'. But where lies the obstacle? Why, my Lord of London (who is usually consulted by the Minister of State on such occasions) spoke some disadvantageous things of you once in the presence of Sir John.⁴ But I could not but observe to our friend that the misrepresented strictness of life which gave occasion for those disadvantageous things to be spoken of you, was so far from being an objection to your being favoured by a Christian bishop that I humbly hoped it would turn to your good account, insomuch as over-exactness in behaviour was the sign of a tender and well-disposed mind. But I cannot here help thinking on the case of poor Mr. [Charles] Rivington, though no hints were given on that score. Yet

*Tros Tyriusve illi nullo discrimine agetur.*⁵

Sir John thinks the Bishop of Oxford can be your friend.⁶ Yes, I told him, my Lord might give you a favourable word, if asked, but I did not think that your interest in his lordship was so prevalent as to make him bestir himself in your behalf. However, if you judge it proper to write to the bishop, I will wait upon him and do the best I can to serve my dear friend. Could your father's book⁷ be presented to the Queen soon? It might do good. The thing is not so difficult, I hope, if one could get a hearty friend to espouse you. My interest in the speaker is not powerful enough, I believe, to bring about so desired a work; yet if there was any other great man to befriend you, a serviceable hint might be dropped. I doubt not but our good and loving God will order this and everything else for the great and best good. This is the wish and prayer of, dear sir,

Yours most sincerely,

¹JW and CW (accompanied by Westley Hall) walked to Epworth to be with their dying father, arriving on Good Friday, Apr. 4, 1735. JW took charge of both the family and the parish. In order to help his father 'end his days in peace' he reversed his earlier decision, and soon after his arrival wrote to his Oxford Methodist colleague, Thomas Broughton, now serving in London, asking him to take the steps which he had already offered in order to secure the Epworth living for JW. Broughton's reply was not as hopeful as both had expected, although he kept on trying. In fact the living went to the Rev. Samuel Hurst, though JW stayed on as the acting minister for two months. After leaving Epworth, JW had *Job* to care for in London, and at the end of August Georgia was offered him as a replacement for Epworth.

²Cf. Ps. 146:3.

³Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745).

⁴Edmund Gibson (1669–1748) was the current Bishop of London.

⁵Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, i.574, 'Trojan or Tyrian matters little to him'—in orig., '*mihī*', 'to me'.

⁶I.e., John Potter.

⁷*Dissertationes in Librum Jobi*.

T. Broughton

Mr. and Mrs. Rivington join with me in hearty and humble services to all with you, especially your good father. Pray remember us.

Pray let me hear from you forthwith. I intend calling at Johnson's Court.

No address portion.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Brou April 15, 1735'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/20.⁸

⁸Transcription published in *Works*, 25:422–23.

From George Whitefield

Oxford
May 8, 1735

Reverend Sir,

[1.] Yours I received on Saturday last,¹ just as my cold returned upon me, and in the midst of my evening devotions. But was really something startled to find your letter in the least favour any design of my leaving Oxford, having not doubted for some time before but that you would send me a positive order not to stir a step upon any solicitations whatsoever. But seeing what you was pleased to write, and reflecting upon some other circumstances that have occurred, I began to think Providence ere long intended (though I even tremble at the mentioning it) that I should see Gloucester [at] last.

[2.] To give you my reasons why I should think so seems to be my next business. Last Tuesday, then, sir, was seven[n]ight the doctor came and paid me his last visit, telling me I had nothing to do but to use exercise and eat heartily in order to recover my health. Whilst he was here, in came my kind tutor, and was vastly pressing upon me to go into the country, urging that it was really, as he imagined, my indispensable duty, that change of air was probably the only remedy for my present disorder, and that variety of company, and seeing my friends, might be very effectual towards my recovery. This last part of his advice I replied to by telling him, that as for variety of company, I could not think it would be any means at all, being positive that that company in which I could most improve myself in perfecting my nature was certainly the best for me in any state of health whatsoever. This indeed was some private conversation after the doctor left me, who (if I am not greatly mistaken) advised me positively to go down, and drink milk in a morning; so that whether I am obliged in duty to follow this advice as a prescription under God, or whether this might not proceed from something he had heard of my way of life, and so not to be regarded, give me leave, sir, to leave to your determination.

[3.] As for what my tutor urged, I have found in a great measure true that Oxford air is probably the chief cause of my present illness. For I have frequently been in very fair expectations of recovery, but upon my going out a little something or another has happened that has made me relapse, which I can impute to nothing so much as to those cold winds which blow here in a morning, and which probably were the secondary causes of my present visitation. Last Saturday, I think, sir, was the third time my disorder has returned upon me, and I find no likelihood of its leaving me as yet, the weather still continuing uncertain, so that I am really in great doubt how to act in my present circumstances. But God, I trust, will direct you how to advise me.

[4.] You was pleased to tell me, sir, if Providence makes my 'leaving Oxford unavoidable, the danger, great as it is, will do me no hurt'. As for the danger, sir, alas! I tremble at the thought of it, heartily believing if it is God's will I shall leave Oxford, none but his almighty arm can conduct me through those innumerable difficulties which must necessarily be consequent on my seeing Gloucester. What makes me most solicitous is the want of having that expression in your last explained—viz., 'If providence makes my leaving Oxford unavoidable'—and therefore would beg the favour of you, sir, to inform me whether the reasons here subjoined do in your opinion answer the extent of that expression.

[5.] The same evening I received yours, sir, I was under a great concern, believing I must soon take a journey into the country. Upon that I thought proper to set some time apart before I went to bed, to pray for direction, which I accordingly did; and afterwards, lying in my bed and finding myself not at all inclinable to sleep, the following thoughts came into my head. That if Oxford air was certainly prejudicial to my health it was certainly my duty to go down. That I was here on great expenses, it having cost me, besides my apothecary's bill, which I have not as yet seen, above two guineas in less than a month, and that I knew my friends' circumstances could not support me in this way, and consequently it would be tempting the Lord obstinately to continue here when the country air might probably be an effectual

¹This letter of c. May 1, responds to Whitefield's letter of c. April 20, neither of which has survived.

remedy. That I was now a useless member of the society to which I belong, and in all likelihood should still continue so. Add to this that it was very disputable whether my pay, since I cannot serve, would be allowed me or not. And that therefore it was presumption not to follow my friend's advice. Now whether these were only in your opinion, sir, suggestions impressed upon my understanding by the devil in order to delude me, or coming from the Holy Spirit, is a question I trust you will be enabled to resolve.

[6.] Since that, it has occurred to my mind that by my present confinement Providence seems to have shown me he can support me without those means I used to set so great a value on, having not been at public worship except once or twice for a quarter of an hour to communicate ever since Passion week. And then I once narrowly escaped being choked at Mr. [Matthew] Salmon's for going out, as I thought afterwards, too presumptuously, in too cold a morning. All these things very easily come into my mind whilst I am writing, sir, whether from the enemy or not I cannot say. However, I can assure [you] I have prayed heartily ever since the reception of your last for direction, and therefore am fully assured our good and all-gracious God will not let me 'seek death in the error of my life'.

[7.] I have endeavoured, sir, to the utmost of my power, to follow your advice in a former letter; viz., 'to press on, and not to faint'.² I have enlarged my morning and evening devotions now, I think, to full two hours. I have frequently renewed my acts of resignation. I have prayed over the Scripture, which is now my entire study almost, every day, and have found it frequently suggested to me that generally there was more than one called in an house. But alas! my understanding is so very deceivable, I could not tell what to think of it. And therefore have been as minute as possible, in order that you by God's assistance may 'be³ enabled to advise me.

[8.] 'As my day is', you was pleased to tell me, 'so will my strength be.'⁴ I should take it as a favour if you would explain that expression a little more fully.

[9.] Before I enumerate to you the symp(toms which are against) my continuance at Oxford, give me leave to inform you of one or two more particulars. First, then, (Mr.) Harvy⁵ has the last week wrote me a most enlivening letter, exhor(ting me) to 'press on and not to faint'; that he reads to the poor, and that their number is somewhat increased; that the clergyman was to deter(mine) at his next meeting about his having prayers twice a week. This made me think Providence would equally support me if I did not go without full conviction. He is cured of the disorder in his leg, but sadly afflicted with another disorder, for which he begs our most im(portunate pra)yers. He tells me the enemy is somewhat repressed in his temptations. But to return. Last Tuesday night, at evening prayer, came Mr. [John] Sarney, and disturbed me with the joyful news that he has had a frequent conference with the minister of the parish in whose house the Master [of Pembroke College] lodges, particularly the night before, till eleven o'clock! That he had nothing to object against what he said, but that it was contrary to flesh and blood. That he hopes to prevail on him to have sacrament administered once a month, having urged nothing to excuse himself but the fear of a congregation, which he promised to make up out of their own family. And what is still more surprising, the church being very much out of repair, he was put on a project to make a collection of fifteen pounds to new roof it. He has already gotten two guineas, and doubts not of making up the rest. All which made me think that if I was sincere God would equally support me.

[10.] All that seems to be against me is this, that soon after I troubled you, sir, with my last, I received a letter from my mother,⁶ with the joyful news, as I thought, of her having resigned me up to God, and left me solely to my own disposal. Upon that I wrote a letter to my brother, who had been before so importunate with me to come down, desiring the same favour of him and my other friends to

²Almost certainly JW's response to Whitefield's letter of Apr. 1, probably written c. Apr. 9.

³Several lines are affected by a tear from the letter seal.

⁴Cf. Deut. 33:25.

⁵Likely James Hervey.

⁶Elizabeth (Edwards) Whitefield (1680–1751).

this. I have as yet received no answer. This I thought had put a full stop to all further temptations to leave Oxford. But soon after came your letter, which made me quite change my opinion.

[11.] My illness still continues, sir, and my cold not at all, in all appearance, the better. Indeed I am freed of the doctor, but am still confined to my room, which has made me think that Providence intends to prepare me by this visitation to go out in the world. But all future things belong to God. Into his all-gracious arms I blindly throw myself, not doubting but that he will still guide me as well as he has hitherto done. To sum up all this tedious scribble in one general question, I beg, sir, you would be pleased to inform me as soon as opportunity will permit whether, supposing my illness continues, or if I do recover, if my friends repeat their solicitations, I should dare venture down, without laying any projects how to act, but merely to go down because God will have me; and in doing this you will greatly oblige, reverend sir,

Your troublesome but sincerely humble servant,

George Whitefield

Mr. [Richard] Smith came home, I think on Monday. Pray, sir, my hearty love to your brother. And let me beg all your prayers, dear sir.

Address: 'To / The Revrd Mr. John Westley at Epworth / to be sent from Gainsborough post office / in Lincolnshire'.

Postmarks: '9/MA', 'OXFORD'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Whitefield / May 5 [sic], 1735'.⁷

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 2008/015.⁸

⁷JW wrote on the letter the outline of his reply (see *Works*, 25:427).

⁸Transcription published in *Works*, 25:423–26.

From George Whitefield

Gloucester
June 11, 1735

Reverend Sir,

I should have taken the freedom of writing to you ere now, had I imagined you was returned to Oxford, or had my affairs been in any settled way. But really sir, I have been so tossed up and down by variety of company and temptation that I scarcely have had time to do anything. The occasion of my leaving Oxford in so abrupt a manner my dear friends, I suppose, have acquainted you with. And how I was received at Gloucester, Mr. [John] Hutching's letter sufficiently informed you.¹

I have been a week at Bristol,² and if any poor soul deserved your pious prayers, surely mine did. For it is impossible to tell you one of a thousand of those dangers to which I was there exposed. But when we are weak, then are we strong.³ The Lord was my support and I escaped the hands of the enemy.

I had no great opportunities offered me at Bristol of promoting God's glory, any further than by showing a good example. For alas, all my relations seem to be in a sad tepid state. But what said the angel to Zacharias? 'Thy prayer is heard.'⁴ Probably for a son, says Mr. Wesley, which undoubtedly was made many years before. So that I doubt not, but God will one day or another, open their hearts to receive the word of truth. My poor mother seems very desirous of withdrawing from the world, and I trust will soon have means put in her way to do it. My brother, the inn keeper,⁵ has had variety of misfortunes, but I fear they have not met with their intended effect. However I hope if I can get him to use prayer, he will soon grow better. The captain of the ship⁶ seems to be in too great a hurry to attend to religion. But he has a desire of reading Mr. [William] Law, which I hope will be sanctified to him.

But though my relations are in this condition, I find my other friends are not. For they all vastly solicit me to pay them visits, so that in a short time I trust we shall have a religious society. I have gotten three clergymen at Gloucester; all I hope capable of being worked upon. And I was sent for by the gentleman's brother where I lodge, who is minister of Stonehouse,⁷ in a very pressing manner, and I trust our meeting will be sanctified. My dear friend who used to correspond with me at Oxford seems now to perceive some pangs of the new birth. His greatest struggle is to leave the world. I believe he will soon get over it. We have the whole house to ourselves. I find he has done what he could, and seems desirous of doing more. He earnestly desires your prayers.

Last night one Mr. Escott, a clergyman, came to see me and we spent the evening in religious conversation and hope ere long to have set nights for our meetings. Be pleased to advise me what I had best recommend for our reading. I was thinking to take Burkitt on the New Testament.⁸ The Scriptures are now my sole study, but I am in great want of your advice, sir, how to prosecute them, intending to read them as practicable as possible. What do you think, pray sir, of Patrick on the Proverbs?⁹ I trust God has

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²He was lodging with his sister, Elizabeth (Whitefield) Grevil.

³Cf. 2 Cor. 12:10.

⁴Luke 1:13.

⁵Richard Whitefield (b. 1708) had taken over control of the Bell Inn on his father's death.

⁶Capt. James Whitefield (1709–66), another brother of George.

⁷Rev. Samuel Harris was vicar of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire from 1723 to 1763; Whitefield was lodging with his brother Gabriel, who is the friend now experiencing pangs of the new birth.

⁸William Burkitt, *Expository Notes with Practical Observations on the New Testament* (London: Parkhurst, Robinson, & Wyatt, 1700).

⁹Simon Patrick, *The Proverbs of Solomon Paraphrased* (London: M. Flesher, 1683).

opened a door for me to be an instrument of propagating the gospel in Swansea in Wales. The particulars you shall hear hereafter. I want sadly some more religious books, and a set of your prayers.¹⁰ Be so good, sir, as to let me have them with a letter next coach.

I have not time to write to my dear brethren as I would, but if Mr. [Thomas] Broughton, Mr. [Matthew] Salmon, etc., would but send me a line, they cannot imagine what service they might do. If one of them would enlarge a little on the vanity of worldly pleasures, who knows how God may work by them. I have a great deal more to say, but must refer it to another opportunity. Give me leave, sir, only to send my due respects to all my brethren and, with my earnest petition for their importunate prayers, to subscribe myself, reverend sir,

Your very humble servant,

G. Whitefield

Source: published transcription; *Methodist Magazine* 21 (1798): 439–40.

¹⁰JW, *A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week* (1733).

From the Rev. Benjamin Ingham¹

London
June 17, 1735

Reverend Sir,

The chief interest of this is to express my gratitude and respect to you and dear Mr. Charles [Wesley]. At your departure from Oxford there might seem to be some indifference between us. But according to the old saying, *Amantium irae amoris redentigratio est*.² My affections have been inflamed the more since that time, and I have often thought of writing to inform you of it, but hitherto have delayed. I have reason to believe that you have met with a variety of trials at Epworth, and I have heard you evil spoken of abroad. And for these reasons I do assure you, I love you the more and pray the more earnestly for you.

You have heard of the fluctuating condition of some acquaintance at Oxford. London friends have much the same esteem of you: 'You are a good man, but you are too rigid', etc. Contra: 'Master in so saying thou reproachest us also.'³ But to give you some good news, Mr. [Matthew] Salmon is a sincere friend. Mr. [George] Whitefield is well known to you; I contracted great intimacy with him since your departure. He is zealous in a good cause. All friends at Queen's College I left in a hopeful condition. Their number is increased, and I verily believe will increase. Mr. [James] Hervey fights manfully in Northamptonshire. Mr. [Thomas] Broughton is really a holy man. Mr. Morgan's⁴ case I suppose you have heard—how he is forbid all communication with you, or your friends, etc. I hope he will make a good Christian. Our friends at Ossett go on very well. I baptized Piggot and preached at the Castle the day I was ordained. I think there were thirty, save one, at the sacrament at Saint Mary's the day before I came to London. Piggot and some of our friends were confirmed on Sunday. Mr. [John] Gambold came with me to London, and is with me at Mr. Sissons' as yet. He returns to Oxford with Mr. [Westley] Hall, who has been here a considerable time, on Saturday. On Friday I shall set forward for Matching.⁵ I cannot tell how long I shall stay there. I have thoughts of visiting my friends in Yorkshire this summer, and if you continue at Epworth I think to come and see you. I have also a desire to see Mr. [John] Clayton at Manchester. I have been with Mr. Gambold and Hall to see Mr. [William] Law. We asked him some questions, but he talked about nothing but man's fall, and the one thing necessary.⁶ He is a divine man. I like several of the religious people in London pretty well, but I must confess they are not over zealous.

I have had a great many turns and changes since I saw you. I believe we must be perfected through sufferings. Notwithstanding, by the blessing of *God*, I hope to press on, and persevere in a constant use of all the means of grace. I intend at present to read the Scriptures in English, together with Mr. Law's books. When I shall have the happiness of seeing you, or your brother, I shall acquaint you with many particulars which I cannot now mention. In the meantime I rest, dear sir,

Your sincere and affectionate friend and brother in Christ,

B. Ingham

My hearty respects to your brother and mother, etc.
Mrs. Sissons sends her service.
Pray let me hear from you shortly.

¹Ingham was ordained on June 2, 1735.

²Cf. Terence, *Lady of Andros*, 555 'Amantium irae amoris intigratio est'; 'lovers' quarrels are the renewal of love'.

³Luke 11:45.

⁴Richard Morgan Jr., JW's former student.

⁵Matching, Essex.

⁶Cf. Luke 10:42.

Direct to me at Mr. Sissons in George Yard on Snow Hill.

Address: 'For / the Revd. Mr. John Wesley / at Epworth, to be left at ye / Post Office in Gainsborough /
Lincolnshire'.

Postmark: '17/IV'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Ingh. June 17. 1735'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/85.⁷

⁷Transcription published in *Collection* (1797), 3–4; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 71 (1848): 1094; and *Wesley Banner* 4 (1852): 126–27.

From George Whitefield

Gloucester
July 11, 1735

Reverend Sir,

Presuming you have by this time reached Oxford, and hoping I should be favoured with a line from you ere long, I have taken the freedom of troubling you with another letter that you might answer both this and my former in one. Mr. [Westley] Hall has informed you I suppose, sir, how matters stood with me when he heard from me last, and I think they now continue in the same situation. Only a particular circumstance or two has since happened to me, in which I must beg your speedy advice, and which will be the import of the subsequent part of this letter.

Know then, reverend sir, that there is a young man in this town with whom formerly I had contracted some small acquaintance, on account of his moral and intellectual accomplishments. He is by profession a plush weaver, but as for knowledge in the speculative part both of philosophy and divinity fitter to be one of the 'sons of the prophets'.¹ He was bred a Dissenter, but about three months ago he came over to our Church, though never as yet received the holy sacrament. The second time I conversed with him, I gave Mr. Norris's extract on learning,² which wrought such a conviction in him, that he began to condemn his former deep researches into nature, and is now almost resolved to lay all such speculative studies aside, and apply what he has read to practice. Since that, he has had the other extract on Christian prudence³ and approves of it exceedingly. He really seems wonderfully well grounded in the principles of religion, having made the Scriptures his constant study. I advised him as soon as possible to prepare for the sacrament, which he seemed to refuse only out of a humble opinion of his own infinite unworthiness. This I trust he will soon get over. But the case I want your advice in, sir, in reference to this young man is this: whether the baptism he received from the Dissenters is valid or not. If not, why or wherefore. Or whether he may presume to approach the Lord's Table before he has been baptized into our Church. And if he cannot, how I had best proceed to get him baptized as soon as possible. The Bishop confirms very speedily, so that you will be pleased to send me a quick answer. I trust God will incline his heart to submit to everything you shall advise him to. I told him of my intention to propose his case to you, and he seemed very willing. May God enable you, dear sir, to give me a full and satisfactory answer.

The other particular I beg leave to trouble you with concerns my poor mother, who (as I think I have formerly acquainted you) has been greatly reduced by marrying a second husband.⁴ They always lived (on account of my mother's having so many children who wanted that money he had spent to settle them in the world) a very uncomfortable life. And for these two years past have not cohabited together. He tells me it was her fault, she going down to Bristol to see my sister without asking a formal leave of him. But to my knowledge she has been willing to come again several times would he have come to any reasonable terms. (When⁵) my mother married him, sir, he had an estate of about £40 (....) years which my mother had made over to a friend by his consent, who was to give her the rent, allowing him £5 a year,

¹Cf. 2 Kings 6.

²John Norris, *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life: with Reference to Learning and Knowledge* (London: Samuel Manship, 1690); extracted and republished by JW in 1734.

³John Norris, *A Treatise Concerning Christian Prudence* (London: Samuel Manship, 1710); abridged and republished by JW as *A Treatise on Christian Prudence* (1734).

⁴Elizabeth Whitefield's husband Thomas (b. 1681) died in 1716. In 1722 she married Capel Longden, an ironmonger, who soon tried to seize control of the family business—Bell Inn. Capel would die in 1738, bringing an end to this struggle.

⁵In this and the following case a small portion of the letter is missing, where the wax seal had been. The readings are conjectured.

but since he has found a flaw in the writings, has recovered almost the whole estate, and has not allowed my mother a farthing for now almost these three years. My brothers have ever since paid her board at my sister's in Bristol where she lives a very jovial but alas too lukewarm a life. She seems really very desirous of retiring from the world and would willingly cohabit with her husband. I have talked with him once or twice, but he seems neither desirous of her company, nor willing to allow her any more than £5 a year. All we desire is but ten and that not for a separate maintenance but to board with him here in town. Now what I want to be instructed in is this, sir: whether my mother on any terms can justify living separate from her husband. Or whether if she be willing to live with him and he will not allow her maintenance she may not lawfully keep from him. I have been very solicitous, sir, and have put up my prayers incessantly that they might spend the remainder of their days together. But really, sir, he seems to be so very unreasonable that I cannot see any probability of bringing about so wished for a union. If you think they may still live separate, I believe my mother will come up with me and board at Oxford, where I trust she may prepare her soul for heaven. I have been more particular, in order that you might have a better insight into the affair and so [be] better able to judge between them. May God direct your judgment.

I should now have done, only I must first have leave to trespass a little longer whilst I inform you that yesterday I paid a visit to a dissenting tradesman, in all probability a most spiritual man, and who seems to be a solid thorough established Christian. I trust our correspondence will be sanctified. One of their brethren has bought both Mr. Law's books,⁶ and I find others have seen them. I hope ere long they will grow pretty intimate. By that time you are pleased to answer this, perhaps something extraordinary may happen, which I shall not fail informing you of as soon as possible. Till when, give me leave only to subjoin my hearty love to all my dear brethren, and with my earnest petition for their most importunate prayers to subscribe myself, reverend sir,

Your very humble servant

George Whitefield

P.S. I have a little frivolous scruple, sir, which I should be glad if you would resolve. I am invited frequently out to breakfast to some tepid acquaintance, who seem very indifferent about asking a blessing on the food they are about receiving. Now I have doubted whether I should beg them to ask a solemn blessing, or be content to ask one privately myself. Sometimes I have did one, sometimes the other. I fear I have been to blame.

I hope to answer dear Mr. Harvey's⁷ letter next week.

Address: 'To / The Revd. Mr. John Westley / Fellow of Lincoln College / in / Oxford'.

Postmark: 'GLOUS / TER'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'G Wh July 11 1735'.

Source: holograph; Duke University, Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box WF 5.⁸

⁶William Law, *A Practical Treatise upon Christian Perfection* (London: William Innys, 1726); and *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (London: William Innys, 1729).

⁷Again, it is almost certainly James Hervey that is intended.

⁸Transcription published in *WHS* 48 (1992): 120–22.

From Kezia Wesley

[Berkswell, Warwickshire]

August 14, 1735

Dear Brother,

I shall, according to your desire, give you as particular an account of my state as possible. I rise at 5:00, breakfast at 9:00, read an hour in the *Spectator*, then work till dinner, after which we meet together again and work till 6:00 (except we are abroad), sup at 7:00, talk of indifferent subjects till 9:00, then go to prayers and about 10:00 to bed. We have not much religious conversation because it is thought quite particular, though Mr. Boyse¹ makes a moral reflection sometimes when he can do it without appearing too singular.

I am sorry to find it is absolutely impossible to fix any stated time for retirement in the evening, except I resolve never to visit or be visited. Not that I think it an indispensable duty, because if I did I would give up everything rather than omit it. Yet I am much easier when I have spent an hour alone than when I have not. Perhaps this pain in the reflection may proceed from my being used to it for the first twenty years of life, and not from it being morally evil (at least, I am willing to believe it does). I shall be glad to know your thoughts about it.

Mr. Boyse has lent me Stanhope's comment upon the epistles and gospels.² There are four volumes, which I believe will last my reading till we meet again. I thank you for your compliment, by way of exhortation, though I am in no danger of reading curious books because here are none but what I have seen before. 'Tis true I have read about half through the little paper book of meditations which I began when we were together. You may remember you feared the man's being a heretic from his giving the wise caution: 'Let not the reader make too much haste in condemning me though the thing discoursed of does not agree with common belief!' He treats of justification, our Saviour, the Athanasian creed, etc., in quite a different manner from any I ever read or heard of before. So far I will agree with him—that if he or any other person can produce a system of morals that contains rules and precepts more just and glorious in themselves, or more conducive to the welfare and perfection of mankind, than the gospel recommends, I will immediately give it up and adhere to that as long as I live. I would willingly see you before I read the rest of the gentleman's writings, but I'm afraid I can't have patience to stay so long (they are exceedingly curious).

I have kept an account of my expenses from the time of coming to Berkswell,³ and have spent 38 shillings. Or if I had not, my dear brother's desiring it would be a sufficient motive for my doing any thing that is not morally evil. The place, the persons, and our manner of living I like so well that I don't desire any alteration for the better. The greatest inconvenience I have is my being from far from the clock, which makes it not so cheerful as if I could know the time. Mr. [Lionel] Kirkham tried to get me an alarm, but there was none either to be bought or borrowed.

Dear brother, I thank God I am much easier than I have been for some years, or ever thought I should have been more! But I am not yet perfectly resigned. I cannot help having great pain when I think of your friend!⁴ Nor fear ever shall reflect, without grief. 'Tis wondrous strange, when I am convinced,

¹Following the death of her father, Kezia was living with Rev. Richard Boyse (1684–1759) and Mary (Blackford?) Boyse; Boyse was rector of Berkswell and the chapel of Barston. The connection with the Boyse family was a fruit of the friendship of JW and CW with the family of Rev. Lionel Kirkham, rector of Stanton; Lionel's wife, Damaris (Boyse) Kirkham, was a sister of Richard Boyse.

²George Stanhope, *A Paraphrase and Comment upon the Epistles and Gospels appointed to be used in the Church of England*, 4 vols. (London, 1705–09).

³A parish 6.25 miles NW of Coventry, home of the Boyses.

⁴I.e., Westley Hall.

My sum of life must God's decrees fulfill,
What derogates from his command is ill;
And that alone is good, which centers in his will.⁵

Dear brother, continue your prayers for me.
Yours till death,

Kezia Wesley

P.S. Mrs. Boyeses⁶ give their service, and Mr. Boyse desires to know if there is any hopes of his ever seeing Job.⁷

Address: 'To / the Revd. Mr. John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Aug. 14, 1735'.

Source: secondary transcription; MARC, DDWes 8/36.⁸

⁵Matthew Prior, *Solomon*, Book III, lines 844–46.

⁶Mary, the wife of Richard Boyse, and his unmarried sister Susanna Boyse (1681–1772); older single women were also addressed as 'Mrs.' at this time. Susanna appears as a frequent correspondent in JW's Letter-book (1724–29) under the literary nick-name of 'Serena'.

⁷I.e., Samuel Wesley Sr's *Dissertationes in Librum Jobi*.

⁸Address and endorsement information given by Frank Baker, who apparently had access to the holograph at some point.

From the Rev. Benjamin Ingham

[London]
[c. September 4], 1735

... About six weeks before we took shipping for Georgia, I received a letter from the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, the substance whereof was as follows: 'Fast and pray; and then send me word whether you dare go with me to the Indians.' Having observed his directions, about three days after the receipt of this, I answered him to this effect:

I am satisfied that God's providence has placed me in my present station. Whether He would have me go to the Indians or not, I am not as yet informed. I dare not go without being called.

Source: secondary copy; MARC, MA 1977/485, p. 7 (copy of Ingham's manuscript journal of voyage to Georgia, May 1, 1736).¹

¹Transcription published in Tyerman, *Oxford Methodists*, 64. MARC copy likely made from the surviving manuscript in an unknown hand preserved in papers of John Perceval, 1st Earl of Egmont; University of Georgia, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Earl of Egmont papers, volume 14201, pp. 421–64.

From Rev. John Burton¹

Christ Church College, Oxon
September 8, 1735

Dear Sir,

I had it in commission to wait upon you at Oxford, whither by this time I imagined you might be arrived. Your short conference with Mr. [James] Oglethorpe has raised the hopes of many good persons that you and yours would join in an undertaking which cannot be better executed than by such instruments. I have thought again of the matter, and upon the result of the whole cannot help again recommending the undertaking to your choice, and the more so since in our inquiries there appears such an unfitness in the generality of people. That state of ease, luxury, levity, inadvertency observable in most of the plausible and popular doctors are disqualifications in a Christian teacher, and would lead us to look for a different set of people. The more men are inured to contempt of ornaments and conveniences of life, to serious thoughts and bodily austerities, the fitter they are for a state which more properly represents our Christian pilgrimage. And if upon consideration of the matter you think yourselves (as you must do, at least amidst such a scarcity of proper persons) the fit instruments for so good a work, you will be ready to embrace this opportunity of doing good, which is not in vain offered to you. Mr. Oglethorpe, with company, embarks the 5th of October. Be pleased to write a line signifying your thoughts to me or Mr. Oglethorpe. And if by advice I can be assistant to you, you may command my best services.

Yours affectionately,

J. Burton

Mr. Horne² tells me he heard you were at Manchester. I presume you are with Mr. [John] Clayton deliberating about this affair. My service to him.

Address: 'To the Rev. Mr. John Wesley / Fellow of Lincoln College / Oxon'.

Postmark: '09/SE'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Dr.³ Burton Sept. 8. 1735'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/30.

¹John Burton (1696–1771) was a graduate of Corpus Christi College, Oxford (BA, 1717; MA, 1721), and from 1733 fellow of Eton College (where he spent much of his time). Burton came to know JW at Oxford. JW's first recorded letter to him is dated May 2, 1726. This is the first surviving letter of Burton to JW.

²Thomas Horne (1707–69), who received his BA (1728) and MA (1731) from Christ Church, and remained there as a tutor (working for a while alongside CW) until 1736, when he became vicar of Spelsbury (having been ordained in 1732).

³JW obviously added this annotation some time after 1752, when Burton earned his D.D.

From James Edward Oglethorpe¹

Old Palace Yard, Westminster,
September 9, 1735

Sir,

I received yours, and the chief point you say to be considered is whether any other can do the business God has required of you. I suppose that is in England. Surely there are more persons capable of doing the offices required by the Church in England than there are capable of undergoing all that is necessary for propagating the gospel in new countries. I believe it is right to consider where a man can be most useful, and the best guide says, Matthew 10[:14], 'Whoever shall not receive you nor hear your words, depart out of that house or city, and shake off the dust of your feet.' Again, chap. 13th, vv. 57 and 58. Consider whether you can be so useful where people are in the situation described Matthew 13:15, as you can be where the heathen is desirous to receive the Word. Read Matthew 18:12–19:29. I should have said more, but the post is just going. I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

James Oglethorpe

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/210.²

¹James Edward Oglethorpe (1696–1785) obtained a commission in the British army in 1710, and saw military service in Europe for a few years before returning to oversee his family estate and (from 1722) to serve as Member of Parliament for Haslemere. His attention was drawn to the terrible conditions in debtors' prisons, which he publicly exposed. This in turn led to his securing a charter to settle the colony of Georgia in America, partly as an outlet for social misfits, partly as an opportunity for developing new territory both as a market and as a buffer zone against the encroachments of the Spanish in the south. The Georgia Trust, of which he was the chairman, set up offices in Old Palace Yard, Westminster, where they received subscriptions, and met regularly to administer the affairs of the new colony. In 1732 Oglethorpe escorted the first 114 settlers to Georgia, and during 1734–35 was recruiting a further contingent, as well as reinforcements and perhaps a replacement for its spiritual leadership, the first minister, the Rev. Samuel Quincy, having fallen below expectations. In Dec. 1734, Samuel Wesley Sr. suggested his (recently widowed) son-in-law John Whitelamb. In Aug. 1735 John Burton raised with JW the possibility of him going to Georgia. JW met with Oglethorpe to talk about this possibility a couple of times, and consulted with William Law, with his friends in Manchester, and with his mother. He then wrote Oglethorpe (around Sept. 4; the letter does not survive) that he was prepared to consider an appointment, though some uncertainty still remained. This is Oglethorpe's reply to that letter.

²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:432.

From the Rev. John Clayton

[Manchester]
[c. September 11, 1735]

[[Dear Sir,

[[I made bold to open your letter, that I might have an opportunity of writing a line in it, as judging there were no secrets between Mr. Oglethorpe and you. I have been these two evenings at Dr. [Thomas] Deacon's, who is getting forward with the catechism with all possible expedition.¹ He would have you buy Whiston's catechesis² to take along with you, and I will write the other out as soon as it is done, and send it after you. Be sure remember to dip when you baptize, if it can be possibly done, according to the church's direction.

[[Adieu, dear sir,

J[ohn] C[layton]]]

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/210.³

¹Thomas Deacon's 'catechism' was not published for another decade: Deacon, *A full, True, and Comprehensive View of Christianity ... laid down in two Catechisms* (London: S. Newton, 1747).

²William Whiston, *A Primitive Catechism; by Way of Question and Answer* (London: Senex and Taylore, 1718).

³This message is written by John Clayton, in Byrom's shorthand, beneath Oglethorpe's signature on the second page of the preceding letter. The address sheet is missing, but Clayton apparently wrote from Manchester (to which Oglethorpe's reply was sent), around Sept. 11. A transcription of the shorthand is published in *Works*, 25:433.

From Rev. John Burton

Old Palace Yard [Westminster]
September 18 [1735]

Dear Sir,

It was with no small pleasure that I heard your resolution on the point under consideration. I am persuaded that an opportunity is offered of doing much good in an affair for the conducting of which we can find out but few proper instruments. It is a happy circumstance that you should offer yourselves on this occasion. May your hands be strengthened, and your endeavours prospered! Your undertaking adds greater credit to our proceedings, and the propagation of religion will be the distinguishing honour of our colony. This has ever in like cases been the desideratum; a defect seamily¹ lamented, but scarce ever remedied. With greater satisfaction, therefore, we enjoy your readiness to undertake the work. When it is known that good men are thus employed, the pious and charitable will be more encouraged to promote this work. You have too much steadiness of mind to be disturbed by light scoffs of idle and profane.

I heard you were to preach before the University the 21st. You are desired by Mr. Oglethorpe to come hither as soon as you can. Let me then presume to point out your way. Suppose, then, you come to my house at Mapledurham² by Monday noon or night. You come through Wallingford. Seven miles beyond on the river lies Mapledurham. I will attend and convey you from thence to London, and introduce you to our friends, and will be assistant to you as well as I can. If you write answer by tomorrow's post, your letter will come to me by Sunday at Mapledurham near Reading.

Let me put a matter to be considered by your brother Charles. Would it not be more advisable that he were in orders? This would easily be obtained.

My respects and good wishes attend you and yours.

John Burton

Address: 'To / the / Revd. Mr John Wesly / at Lincoln College / Oxford'.

Postmark: '18/SE'.

Frank: 'Free James Oglethorpe'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Sept. 18 1735 / Mr. Burton'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/ 31.³

¹The adverbial form of 'seamy'; meaning 'roughly' or 'harshly'.

²Mapledurham, Oxfordshire; Burton consistently spells 'Maplederham'.

³Transcription published in *Wesley Banner* 4 (1852): 351.

From Richard Morgan Jr.¹

[Oxford]
[September 25, 1735]

Dear Sir,

I hope this will find you and the rest of our friends well. This morning the rector sent for me.² He told me he had heard I had returned to my former strict way of life, and that he must acquaint my father with it. I desired he would come to particulars, that where I was wrong I would be glad to be set right. He said I looked thin, and feared I would hurt myself by rigorous fasting. I told him I dined in the hall on Wednesdays, and that I ate bread and butter on Friday mornings. He was pretty well satisfied with this account. He advised me to eat something else instead of tea after fasting, which I promised to do. His next charge was, not sitting in the common room. I said I intended to sit there three nights every week, which he thought was sufficient. I unguardedly told him that if it were agreeable to him I would dine in the hall even on Fridays. He very much approved of this proposal, and said I might observe any other day as a fast instead of it. I believe, if I would go into the hall on fast days all my other activities would be less taken notice of, and I should put it out of the rector's or Mr. [Richard] Hutchin's power to make any complaints of me to my father. If I could be sure of not injuring religion by my example I believe I might comply with the rector herein, for you are very sensible I might notwithstanding observe the same degree of abstinence even on those days.

I depend on the advice of my friends in this affair, and hope God will sanctify it to me. The gospel tells us that the children of God must suffer persecution from the world, but the rector says we must endeavour to have our persons in esteem, and those things wherein we differ from the world, we must do them privately. We must take care our good be not evil spoken of. Though the church enjoins fasting, yet because the bishops, the pillars of the church, do not observe it, it loses its force. When he finds his blood hot, he says, he fasts, but unknown to anybody. He thinks it's a relative duty, and not confined to any particular time. He looks upon it only as a remedy against unchastity, and if we are not troubled with this passion, I suppose, not obligatory. He advised me to read such books as were genteel accomplishments. I have, through God's assistance, in some degree seen my own weakness by the effects of this anti-Christian doctrine, for it has quite discomposed me, though I was enabled to see the fallacy of it. I see nothing so well qualified to destroy my soul, to make me eternally miserable, as the conversation of temporizing Christians, which I hope God will by your advice and other means prevent, as I am sure he will if I am faithful to him. When I desire your advice in this affair I only desire you to prevent my eternal damnation, for it is in the greatest danger from this most subtle, deceitful, and dangerous of all enemies. O that I could express to you the dangers I foresee from this enemy. My eyes and my heart alone could, but there you cannot see. May God enable you to comprehend it, and to do all that is in your power to prevent.

You cannot sufficiently arm me against the rector. I suspect him of insincerity to you. I believe, and Mr. [Thomas] Horn[e] is of the same opinion, that my going to Ireland depends on my going into the hall on fast days. The rector said as much as if you frightened others from religion by your example, and that you might have done a great deal of good if you had been less strict, which I could be glad to be undeceived in, and to know whether the example of a thorough mortified Christian, though it would give the greatest offense, would not do more good than that of a plausible Christian, who would give no offense at all. This is a point of great importance to me.

It has pleased God to let me see that I can make no progress in religion till I have gained some sense of the misery and nothingness of human nature, and of our entire dependence on him. When I am in company, I aim at applause in every word I speak. If the discourse is not directed to me, I am uneasy; if it is, I am proud. So that while I am even in religious company, I am serving the devil instead of God.

¹Morgan had now become one of the Oxford Methodists whom he had previously despised.

²Euseby Isham, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford.

Whatever good God does by me, I attribute it to myself instead of him. In short, I am proud in all respects in the highest degree—a miserable state for a Christian to be in, for the follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. I desire to be otherwise but want to know the method by which my desires are to be reduced to practice. Perhaps God may enable you to assist me in this important duty, which is productive of all others. Though I go into the common room to avoid a greater evil, though I would not live the life those do who spend their time there for all the world, though I am scarce capable of doing anything which is more disagreeable to me, yet the poison is not removed. While I am with them I love my sense, my judgment, my reason. It is true I am all the time in pain, but I cannot say at that time they lead an unchristian, dangerous life. I bet it is for want of faith, and for not looking upon it as a great blessing because it is not my own choice. I want to know how to remove this delusion, and how to make an advantage of that which God no doubt intended for my good. If I do not make a good use of this cross, I am satisfied it will be the ruin of me.

On the contents of this letter depends my eternal salvation. O lay this to your heart, and make my case your own! Do not think you can spend your time better than in answering this letter. I hope you will not forget to pray to God to enable me to follow you wherever it is his will, and never to omit putting me in mind of Christ when you write to me. Pray in your letter to me exhort us to sup together every night, yet to leave the world, and to be together as much as possible. Mr. [John] Robson is in a dangerous way. He is convinced of the necessity of being a Christian, but cannot leave the world. Mr. Carter, I fear, is not steady.³ Mr. [James] Hervey is gone. Mr. [Thomas] Broughton is not yet returned. If he goes to Georgia, it is best⁴

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr. Morgan, Sept. 25, 1735' (on top of first page).

Source: holograph; MARC, WCB, D6/1/214.⁵

³Richard Carter (c. 1713–37?), of Christ Church (1730–34) and New College (M.A. 1737), was ordained in 1737 and may have died the same year (see CW, *MS Journal*, Oct. 1, 1737).

⁴The manuscript is apparently incomplete, ending here at the very bottom of the fourth page, with no address or closing section corresponding to the closing section of JW's reply of Sept. 30.

⁵Abridged transcription published in *Works*, 25:433–34.

From the Rev. John Burton

Eton College [Oxford]
September 28, 1735

Dear Sir,

This day, being obliged to attend at our altar upon the celebration of the sacrament, I left town without seeing you when I knew not where to find [you]. You may imagine that some circumstances or other would continually suggest fresh matter to my thoughts; give me leave to say what occurs to me on this occasion.

The motive to your pious undertaking is the desire of doing good to the souls of others, and in consequence of that to your own. You will readily improve the first opportunity offered to attain this end. Now a very considerable one is offered before you come to Georgia, I mean while you [are] a-shipboard. There you have a numerous family under your care, and confined to attendance. Your private as well as public address to them will then most probably have the best effect on their minds while they see the wonders of [the] Lord in the deep; thus will they come better disposed for religious habits from such impressions. It may be perhaps more convenient for you four to be all together,¹ but it would be much better for the people if some one of you should be in the other ship.² You may perhaps alternately attend in the other vessels as they go in company. Pray labour this first point; tis a most useful exercise of the clergyman's abilities, and most beneficial to the people.

Under the influence of Mr. [James] Oglethorpe giving weight to your endeavours, much may be effected under the present circumstances. The apostolical manner of preaching from house to house will through God's grace be effectual to turn many to righteousness. You come to a people, some ignorant, and most disposed to licentiousness. Your good offices will be required at Savannah town at first, which is but a few miles distant from the Indians. The magistrate will authorize your access to every family, and the younger will be under obligation to receive instructions. I consider you all at first for some time as joint labourers in the same place. You will soon be dispersed to your several stations and employments in the same work; and you'll find abundant room for the exercise of patience and prudence, as well as piety. The generality of the people are babes in the progress of their Christian life, to be fed with milk instead of strong meat³. The wise householder will bring out of his stores food proportioned to the necessities of his family. The circumstances of their present Christian pilgrimage will furnish the most affecting subjects of discourse, and what arises *pro re nata*⁴ will have greater influence than a laboured discourse on a subject in which men think themselves not so immediately concerned. Thus the 107th Psalm, the history of the patriarch's sojourning, Ezra and Nehemiah, etc., furnish matter suited to their apprehension and circumstances; and it is to be observed that historical narratives gain attention more than other sorts of discourses, and insensibly convey with them the good moral which often miscarries under other sorts of conveyance. Of this kind was our Saviour's preaching in parables to the people.

One end for which we were associated was the conversion of negro slaves. As yet nothing has been attempted in this way. But a door is opened, and not far from home. The Purrysburgers have

¹JW, CW, Matthew Salmon, and Westley Hall were currently planning to go together to Georgia. Salmon and Hall backed out, and were replaced by Benjamin Ingham and Charles Delamotte. The final four were assigned to the large cabin, with fourteen other people, but preferring privacy secured two small cabins near the forecastle.

²The *Simmonds*, Capt. Cornish (on which the Wesleys sailed), and the *London Merchant*, Capt. Thomas, with the royal sloop *The Hawk*, Capt. Gascoigne, as escort.

³Cf. Heb. 5:12.

⁴'To meet some special circumstances'.

purchased slaves.⁵ They act under our influence, and Mr. Oglethorpe will think it advisable to begin there. You see the harvest is truly great—καὶ τίς ἱκανός ἐστι πρὸς ταῦτα.⁶ This is a point among others to be kept in view.

With regard to your behaviour and manner of address, that must be determined according to the different circumstances of persons, etc. But you will always in the use of means consider the great end, and therefore your applications will of course vary. You will keep in view the pattern of the gospel preacher, St. Paul, who became all things to all men, that he might gain some.⁷ Here is a nice trial of Christian prudence. Accordingly in every case you would distinguish between what is essential and what is merely circumstantial to Christianity, between what is indispensable and what is variable, between what is of divine and what is of human authority. I mention this because men are apt to deceive themselves in such cases, and we see the traditions and ordinances of men frequently insisted on with more rigour than the commandments of God, to which they are subordinate; singularities of less importance are often espoused with more zeal than the weighty matters of God's law. As in all points we love ourselves, so especially in our hypotheses. Where a man has as it were a property in a notion, he is most industrious to improve it, and that in proportion to the labour of thought he has bestowed upon it; and as its value rises in imagination we are in proportion more unwilling to give it up, and dwell upon it more pertinaciously than upon considerations of general necessity and use. This is a flattering mistake against which we should guard ourselves. Now as you are placed among people of various persuasions in religious matter[s] [this will prove] the great difficulty in your behaviour.

The trustees have been careful to provide all manner of stores for the temporal necessities and conveniences of our people. I could wish that the like care had been taken to supply the spiritual householder, that he might be furnished with proper tools for every good work. I hope still, by the liberality of pious persons, you will be enabled to procure all books of more immediate use. I presume you have Gastrell's *Institutes* concordance,⁸ and lesser instruments of knowledge—these you should have severally.

I am now on the road toward Shermanbury in Sussex, whither I was called about ten days ago on account of my mother's indisposition. I ventured to postpone that visit hitherto. I hope to see you at Gravesend if possible.⁹ I write in haste what occurs to my thoughts. At a leisure hour you may hear from me again. *Disce, docendus adhuc quae censet amicus.*¹⁰ May God prosper your endeavours for the propagation of his gospel! *Ita vovet*¹¹

Your sincere friend,

John Burton

Address: 'For / The Rever[en]d / Mr John Wesley'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr Burton / Sept. 28, 1738' and (in a large hand, on the address portion of the cover, as if the title for a bundle of such letters) 'VI Advice Concerning Georgia'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/32.¹²

⁵A group of German settlers who located in a place they named Purrysburg (in South Carolina).

⁶'And who is sufficient for these things?' (2 Cor. 2:16).

⁷Cf. 1 Cor. 9:19–23.

⁸Francis Gastrell, *The Christian Institutes; or, The sincere word of God, being a plain and impartial account of the whole faith and duty of a Christian: collected out of the writings of the Old and New Testament* (London: E. Powell, 1707). This work was often referred to as a concordance.

⁹Gravesend was the port from which the Wesley brothers would embark for Georgia.

¹⁰Horace, *Epistles*, I.xvii.3. 'Listen to the views of a humble friend, who still needs teaching.'

¹¹'So wishes'.

¹²Transcription published in *Works*, 25:434–37.

From Thomas Broughton

Oxon
October 9, 1735

My Dear Sir,

Was your God whom ye serve able to deliver you so lately from the perils of the great waters? Doubt not but the same good God will send the angel of his presence with you, whensoever and whithersoever ye go, and will shut up the mouth of the great deep, that it shall not hurt you. How excellent is thy mercy, O God! Still may thy redeemed ones, thy little flock, put their trust under the shadow of thy wings;¹ for surely thou wilt feed them in a green pasture, and lead them forth by the waters of comfort.²

Let brotherly love continue. Pray for and exhort us to dwell together in unity. We are as sheep wanting a shepherd. But I trust it will not be so long. O that Reuben's fault may be no longer mine—unstable as water.³ Pray that I may go on from strength to strength.⁴ I am distressed for thee, my brother. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful. I wish I had improved it more to the glory of God, and the good of my soul. But still reserve a blessing for me, and strive together with me in your prayers, for

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

T. Broughton

Address: 'To / The Rev. Mr. John Wesley'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Oct. 9 1736⁵ / Mr Broughton'.

Source: holograph, MARC, WCB, D6/1/198.⁶

¹Cf. Ps. 36:7 (BCP).

²Cf. Ps. 23:2 (BCP).

³See Gen. 49:4.

⁴Cf. Ps. 84:7.

⁵JW misdates by one year.

⁶Transcription published in *The Christian Witness and Church Member's Magazine* 11 (1854):

From Henry Newman¹

Bartlet's Building [London]

October 13, 1735

Reverend Sir,

I hope you received the packet of books in due time by the Society's messenger, a list of which is enclosed, by which you will see the Society desire you would spare what you can to supply the present wants of Messrs. Bolzius and Gronau,² and in return I am sure you will be welcome to receive any out of their or Mr. [Samuel] Quincy's store which you may happen to want.

I hope you long since received the Society's circular letter for this year, but my clerk having omitted to enter it in the index for that purpose I have herewith covered a copy of it,³ for fear it has been forgot.

I heartily wish you and your fellow travellers, with Mr. [James] Oglethorpe, a prosperous voyage, and that it may please God to bless you with health and success in the high errand you have undertaken for his glory, of which it will be a great pleasure to the Society to be as frequently informed as opportunities offer, by, reverend sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Henry Newman

Source: Newman's manuscript copy; Cambridge University, SPCK Archives, GBR.0012/MS SPCK/D4/46, p. 57.⁴

¹JW, on Sept. 23, 1735, had written requesting 'a packet of books, he being to go to Savannah in Georgia', and was himself present at the meeting when this request was approved. On this occasion there was no charge: 'Ordered the books gratis, to the value of £13. 14s. -d.' As Secretary, Henry Newman included this personal greeting.

²Johann Martin Bolzius (1703–65) and Israel Christian Gronau (who died 1745 in Georgia) were Lutheran pastors in spiritual charge of a group of Protestant refugees from Salzburg, led by Commissary Philipp von Reck, who sailed in the *London Merchant*, companion ship to the *Simmonds*, in order to settle in Ebenezer, 20–30 miles northwest of Savannah.

³Henry Newman, *A Copy of the Circular Letter from the Society at London for Promoting Christian Knowledge, etc. to their Residing and Corresponding Members for the Year 1735*.

⁴Published transcriptions in Jones, *Letterbooks*, 178–79; and *Works*, 25:443.

From James Vernon¹

London
November 18, 1735

Mr. Wesley,

The enclosed is [a] copy of a letter from your mother,² which I transmit to you, not out of vanity, but to give you an undoubted testimony of my regard to what you recommend to me. I shall continue my care of what relates to your mother's interest in her husband's books, and flatter myself it will not be without success. I am convinced it is a work agreeable to God to be serviceable to a person endued with so much piety and worth, and who like Hannah has lent a loan unto the Lord.³ And to use no disguises to you, I have an interest in making you my debtor, that you may as opportunity offers repay it to my son, who goes to Georgia with Captain Gascoigne,⁴ by seasoning his mind with the principles of true Christianity. Wishing you all success in your undertakings I remain, your most obedient humble servant,

James Vernon

Address: 'For The Rever[en]d / Mr John Wesley / in Georgia'.

Endorsement: JW's label pasted on, 'VIII. Lrs recd in Georgia from Engld'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/121.⁵

¹A Commissioner of Excise, and one of the original and most active Georgia trustees. JW had written to him on Oct. 18, 1735 (the letter does not survive).

²The enclosed copy letter does not survive.

³I.e., given her son to be a minister; cf. 1 Sam. 1–2.

⁴James Gascoigne was captain of *The Hawk*, the military sloop that escorted Oglethorpe's party.

⁵Transcription published in *Works*, 25:445.

From Thomas Broughton

Oxford
November 27, 1735

Dear Sir,

God grant that this letter may find you happily arrived at the wished for haven. Methinks you call upon me to cry out with the Psalmist, 'O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men.'¹ He doubtless hath done great things for you *already*, and you have seen his wonders in the deep. *Now* it remains that his right hand should bring mighty things to pass at land; which verily shall be accomplished, as Christ hath foretold, 'for in him shall the Gentiles trust'.² Happy people on whom the light of the glorious gospel will be made to shine in its own simple lustre, not clouded by corrupt glosses and fleshly comments, those bitter enemies to the cross of Christ. O Cross of Jesus! What a rock of offence art thou become to the greatest part of Christians? Surely the first worshippers of Christ fought manfully under, and were not ashamed of his cross. And unto his standard will the heathens flock. The Christians only of these present times are ashamed of Christ. And thou that art a teacher in Israel, art thou unlearning this sure, this important lesson, 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution'? You know I have; and if I should say that I have not shrunk from under the cross, I should be a liar.

My own bad heart, and the observation I made of the agreeable lives of my London friends, occasioned my first abatements in strictness of life and holiness of conversation. What pangs and agonies of heart I felt at intervals, God only knows. I laboured for peace, I panted after the love of God, but my heart grew foul, and became a cage of unclean thoughts, for want of mortification and self-denial. I embraced the doctrine of *imputed righteousness*, and had mean thoughts of works. Almost every day furnished me with new ideas of religion. But alas, they all favoured too much, I doubt, of flesh and blood. Therefore they were broken cisterns, and would hold none of the water of life. Since my return from London too, I have been amusing myself with pretty dreams and ideas of true religion. Nor am I, do I dare say, awake yet. Good God! Art thou as mighty to cast into hell *now* as thou wert sixteen hundred year ago? Did the first Christians cry mightily unto thee to spare them, and did *they* see it *absolutely* necessary to work out their salvation with fear and trembling? And dare we, dare I, who have been a wretched, and most excessively wicked sinner, think to gain heaven with less labours and sufferings? But say some, 'I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, . . .'³ Did these cautions come from the servants of Baal, I should lightly regard them; but when holy men of God say so, my faith fails me. O pray for me, that Satan may not sift me as wheat. What though my former melancholy should come again into my soul, like a mighty man of war, and beat down all my proud imaginations and every thought that exalts itself against the discipline of the cross. What though I should be hated and despised of men for this, and be made as the off-scouring of the world. What have I, a grievous sinner, to complain of? Let me do all this, and more than this, that I may win Christ. Let me with patience tread the narrow way that saints and martyrs trod, since it is the surest and safest way to glory. 'But I am a worm and no man, tossed about with every blast of doctrine!'⁴ Establish, strengthen, settle me, O my God!

Mr. Battely has committed his parish to my care.⁵ O that I may feed Christ's sheep, and not be an hireling. Mr. [Matthew] Salmon's heart is with you. But he informs me that Mr. [John] Clayton has

¹Ps. 107:15 (BCP). Specifically suggested for use on deliverance from a storm at sea.

²Cf. Matt. 12:21.

³Prov. 8:12.

⁴Combining Ps. 22:6 and Eph. 14.

⁵Oliver Battely (1697–1762) had been curate at Cowley since 1728; and had just added the responsibility of rector at Iron Acton.

convinced him by letter that he ought to abide where he is, till his parents cease to forbid him from going to Georgia. God will never suffer a supply of fit and able men to be wanting to enlarge his work to America.

At Oxon, we hope to be stirring. The hand of the Lord will uphold our fainting steps, and his Holy Spirit will replenish our souls with manna in this howling wilderness. Cease not, dear brother, to pray for us, as we hope always to pray for you.

I am, dear sir,

Your most obliged and affectionate brother in Christ,

T. Broughton

Salute the brethren. We all salute you.

Endorsement: by JW, '27 Nov 1735'.

Source: MARC, MA 1977/610/21; *Collection* (1797), 4–5.

From Richard Morgan Jr.

Oxon
November 27, 1735

Dear Sir,

How thankful should I be to Almighty God for this opportunity of begging your advice and prayers in, I believe, the most critical part of my life. Know then, sir, that my poor father hath heard of my journey to London. He has wrote to Mr. [Richard] Hutchins, but not to me. He declares he would not be concerned if I had gone along with you. He will not entrust me with the management of my allowance, lest I should give it away in charity. I believe he has lost all his affection for me. Who knows but this may open a way to Georgia? But this is best known to God. I hope I shall be enabled, by the assistance of God and the prayers of my dear friends (which I most earnestly beg) that I may wholly be resigned to the will of our Heavenly Father who knows best how to choose for us. This lesson indeed it has in some measure taught me—namely, to expect to be perfected through sufferings alone, and to look upon them as the greatest if not the only blessings of this life. Since this letter came, I have prayed that, if it be the will of God, my father might let me follow you, and join with you in the Lord's vineyard at Georgia. O that whithersoever I go I may be a faithful labourer in it, whether called to be an ambassador of the Lord Jesus, or to serve in a private capacity. If it be best for me I shall go to you. The Lord's will, not mine, be done. May all my thoughts, words, and actions cry aloud. It is possible I shall go to Ireland soon; if so, it is best for me.¹ O do not cease to praise the Lord in my behalf, for his wonderful goodness to me, in giving me no other desire than that of serving him in the best manner I am capable of, and of dying rather than disown him. If nothing else puts me in mind of you, the winds do. We often use Mr. [John] Clayton's prayer for you. May this find you in the haven where you would be. May the Lord Jehovah prosper your mission! Be pleased to let Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham know I intend going to Yorkshire, if not hindered by my father.

It has pleased God to make Mr. Dickison the instrument of awakening his landlord and landlady. I read to them at Mr. [Thomas] Fox's an hour every other day,² in the Bishop of Man's *Catechism*.³ They are, I hope, thoroughly in earnest, especially the latter. Mrs. [Elizabeth] Fox just now came to me to let me know that she is desirous to go to Georgia, and that her husband and she have agreed to go there, if accepted of. By the return of the ships we shall be able to judge of their sincerity. Mr. Fox and his wife, especially the former, are most zealous Christians. They are earnestly bent on going, and so is Mr. Dickison who is an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile.⁴ The young woman's reason for going is lest she should be deprived of the company of Mr. and Mrs. Fox, in case they should leave Oxford and go to Georgia. They are a very young couple, and have money at interest. He is a tailor by trade. I do not doubt but we shall be able to send you a colony of thorough good Christians.

I have undertaken the care of Bocardo. I go there three days in a week, and Mr. [Thomas] Broughton a fourth. I read every Sunday night to a cheerful number of Christians at Mr. Fox's. O pray for me, that I may persevere in the happy way I have begun. I could say a great more as to our meeting, but am obliged to steal even this time from the holy Scriptures. I find more and more comfort in every day. Indeed the Lord's kingdom increaseth apace.

My love to your brother and Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham and Mr. [Charles] Delamotte, and best respects to Mr. [James] Oglethorpe. I am,

¹Richard Morgan Jr. did return to Dublin, to assist his father.

²Thomas and Elizabeth Fox were leaders of the Methodist society in the city of Oxford; Morgan consistently spells their last name 'Foxe'.

³Thomas Wilson, *The Principles and Duties of Christianity: being a further instruction for such as have learned the Church Catechism* (London: n.p., 1707).

⁴Cf. John 1:47.

Your brother in Christ Jesus,

Richard Morgan

I should be very glad if you could spare me some of your prayers, or anything else which may be of service to me.

Address: 'To / the Revd. Mr. John / Wesley in Georgia'.

Endorsement: by JW, 'Mr. Morgan after Mr. Thorold's'.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/610/100.⁵

⁵Transcription published in *Collection* (1797), 7–8.

From Susanna (Annesley) Wesley

Gainsborough¹
November 27, 1735

[Dear Son,]

... God is being itself! The I am!² And therefore must necessarily be the supreme good! He is so infinitely blessed that every perception of his blissful presence imparts a vital gladness to the heart. Every degree of approach toward him is in the same proportion a degree of happiness. And I often think that were he always present to our minds as we are present to him, there could be no pain or sense of misery. I have long since chose him for my only good! My all! My pleasure, my happiness in this world, as well as in the world to come! And although I have not been so faithful to his grace as I ought to have been, yet I feel my spirit adheres to its choice, and aims daily at cleaving steadfastly unto God. Yet one thing often troubles me, that notwithstanding I know, *while* we are present with the body we are absent from the Lord,³ notwithstanding I have no taste, no relish left for anything the world calls pleasure, yet I do not long to go home, as in reason I ought to do. This often shocks me; and as I constantly pray (almost without ceasing⁴) for thee, my son, so I beg you likewise to pray for me, that God would make me better, and take me at the best.

Your loving mother,

Susanna Wesley

Source: published extract; *Arminian Magazine* 1 (1778): 84–85.⁵

¹With the death of her husband, and a new rector assigned to Epworth, Susanna was staying at the moment with her daughter Emilia, who had married Robert Harper in June 1735.

²A common extrapolation of Exod. 3:14.

³Cf. 2 Cor. 5:6.

⁴Cf. 1 Thess. 5:17.

⁵Republished in *Works*, 25:445–46; and Wallace, *Susanna Wesley*, 172.